A NEW
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND,

FROM THE

DESCENT of the ROMANS,

TO THE

DEMISE of his late Majesty, GEORGE II.

INSCRIBED TO

His present Majesty, GEORGE III.

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HISTORY *is philosophy teaching by examples.*
Bolingbroke *from* Dion. Hali.

VOL. X.

LONDON:
Printed for S. CROWDER and Co. in *Pater-noster-Row,*
and J. WILKIE, in St. *Paul's Church-Yard.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

ENGLAND

OR A

HISTORY

OF

THE

History of ENGLAND.

The HISTORY *of* HENRY III. *continued.*

A. D. 1226.

THE pope, not ſatisfied with his ſuperiority over England, to which he had no juſt claim, and the yearly ſum of a thouſand marks, which was regularly paid, reſolved to turn his intereſt in that country to ſtill better account. He propoſed, that two prebends in every ca-

thedral, and as many cells in every convent in England, ſhould be allotted for the uſe of the court of Rome.

This ſtrange propoſal was laid before the Engliſh prelates and nobility by Otho, the pope's legate; who met with ſuch a reception as, however it might mortify his pride, or diſappoint his avarice, he had all the reaſon in the world to expect. He was given to underſtand, that no categorical anſwer could be given to his demand, on account of the abſence of the king, and ſome of the principal barons, who had not attended the aſſembly.

The biſhops had afterwards ſeveral conferences upon the ſubject, and as they conſidered their own intereſt as intimately connected with that of the court of Rome, they would in all probability have complied with the requeſt of his holineſs, had not the king ſent John Mareſchal to prohibit them from ſubjecting their lay-fees to ſuch an unreaſonable and exorbitant tax.

This prohibition, together with the example of the French court, where the like demand had been made, and rejected with the utmoſt contempt and indignation, put an end to the whole affair. However, as Henry was unwilling to exaſperate the pope by a peremptory refuſal, he deſired the

the legate to acquaint him, that as this was a matter which concerned the whole chriſtian world, he could not, at preſent, come to any fixt and determined reſolution; but, that in this, as well as in every thing elſe of the like nature, he ſhould readily be governed by the example of the other princes in Chriſtendom.

Mean while, Henry continued his warlike preparations againſt France with equal diligence and ſucceſs, until he was obliged to interrupt them by an order of the pope, ſtrictly prohibiting all chriſtian princes from invading the territories of Lewis, who had lately engaged in a cruſade againſt the Albigenſes.

That prince having marched into the ſouthern parts of France with an army of fifty thouſand men, had inveſted the city of Avignon, which, after an obſtinate defence, he compelled to ſurrender. He then entered Languedoc, and, meeting with little or no oppoſition, made himſelf maſter of Montpelier, Bezieres, Carcaſſonne, Pamiers, Lavaur, Albi, and the greateſt part of the province, the conqueſt of which he intended to complete the enſuing campaign; but the execution of this deſign was prevented by his death,

which happened on the eighth of November at Montpenſier in Auvergne *

He was ſucceeded on the throne by his ſon Lewis IX. who was left under the tuition of his mother Blanche of Caſtile, a woman of great ability and addreſs, and who, though a foreigner, had intereſt enough to procure the regency of the kingdom.

Though Henry had already been declared to be of full age by the pope, yet his majority had only been admitted in certain inſtances; but, as he was now in his twentieth year, he convoked a great council of the nation at Oxford, where he declared himſelf to be abſolutely of age, and ſignified his reſolution of governing the kingdom for the future by his own authority.

This ſtep was ſuppoſed to have been taken by the advice of Hubert de Burgh, who, at the ſame time, was created earl of Kent, and acquitted of all accounts for every thing he had done during his regency, which was now expired.

As Hubert was in greater credit with his maſter than any other nobleman, he came of courſe to be deemed the author of ſome unpopular

* Some authors alledge that he was poiſoned by the count de Champagne, who was deſperately in love with the queen.

unpopular meaſures which Henry, about this time, purſued.

Of this kind was an order which he ſent to all the ſheriffs in England, enjoining ſuch as enjoyed eſtates and honours to produce their charters, and to pay a fine for having them renewed and confirmed. Of the ſame nature, too, was a talliage which he impoſed upon all cities, burroughs, and demeſnes of the crown, and, among others, upon the city of London; though it does not appear that the money was levied there as in other places, the citizens having probably compounded, as uſual, for a groſs ſum.

Thus we learn, from an ancient book in the archives of Guild-hall, that the Londoners agreed, ſoon after the death of Lewis VIII. to give Henry an aid * for the recovery of his foreign dominions, on condition that this grant ſhould not be conſidered as a precedent for demanding the like contributions for the future; a conſequence againſt which ſufficient proviſion was made by a patent dated the twenty ſecond of December immediately following.

The odium which Hubert incurred by theſe two meaſures, was greatly encreaſed by the death of the earl of Saliſbury, natural

* The ſum they paid is ſuppoſed to have amounted to five thouſand marks.

ral ſon of Henry II. This nobleman had ſerved the late king with great fidelity and ſucceſs, and was conſidered as a rival in power to Hubert, who invited him to an entertainment in his houſe, ſoon after which he was ſeized with a ſevere fit of illneſs that put an end to his life, not without violent ſuſpicions of his having been poiſoned by the juſticiary.

Henry had certainly a ſtrong inclination after the death of Lewis VIII. and while he ſaw the throne of France poſſeſſed by a minor of twelve years of age, to attempt the recovery of Normandy and Poitou.

With this view he had contracted alliances with the count of La Marche, the viſcount of Thouars, and Ferrand count of Flanders, to the firſt of whom he had given a conſiderable tract of territory, to the ſecond the caſtle of Loudun, with a yearly penſion of five hundred marks, and to the laſt an annuity of the like value, which had been originally granted by his father.

But theſe noblemen being detached from his intereſt by the arts and intrigues of the queen-mother of France, who had likewiſe found means to appeaſe the diſcontents of the count of Champagne, and others of the French nobility, he thought it moſt adviſeable to agree to a truce, which was ſoon after

after concluded, and in conſequence of which his brother Richard returned to England. *

The arrival of this nobleman, however agreeable it might be to the king, who did not want natural affection, was like to have been productive of the moſt fatal conſequences. The late king, it ſeems, had beſtowed the manor of Berkamſtead upon one Waleran Ties, a German, who had defended the caſtle of that name, when it was beſieged by Lewis. This manor being included in the county of Cornwall, Richard commanded Waleran to produce his title, and, in the mean time, ſeized his eſtate.

Waleran, inſtead of obeying the command of his ſuperior, complained to the king, who ordered his brother to reſtore the German to his eſtate; but this the earl refuſed to do, until the matter ſhould be determined by the deciſion of his peers.

The king, incenſed at this refuſal, upbraided Richard with his preſumption, and commanded him to reſign the manor, or quit the kingdom immediately. Richard replied, that he would neither do the one nor the other without a legal trial, and forthwith repaired to Marlborough, where he found his brother-in-law, William earl Mare-

* A. D. 1227.

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Mareſchal, who was greatly enraged at the king, on account of a demand which his majeſty had lately made of the caſtles of Cardigan and Carmarthen.

From thence they ſet out for the ſeat of Ralph earl of Cheſter, who being made acquainted with the nature of their complaints, adviſed them to aſſert their rights by force of arms, and promiſed to aſſiſt them with all his power and intereſt.

Accordingly, letters were immediately diſpatched to the earls of Glouceſter, Warenne, Hereford, Ferrers, and Warwick, who, together with many other noblemen, aſſembled at Stamford with a ſtrong body of forces. Confident of their own ſtrength, and deſpiſing the weakneſs of the king, who was, by no means, in a condition to cope with ſuch a powerful party, they ſent a meſſage to his majeſty, requiring him to give ſatisfaction to his brother, and confirm the charters of liberties, and threatening, in caſe of refuſal, to lay waſte the royal demeſnes.

Intimidated by theſe menaces, and alarmed at the impending danger, Henry was obliged to comply with their requeſt; a council was immediately convoked at Northampton, where every thing was ſettled to the ſatisfaction of all parties; and if Waleran was allowed to

conti-

continue in poſſeſſion of the manor of Berkamſtead, Richard was ſufficiently indemnified by a grant, which he now obtained, of all his mother's jointure in England, and of the lands which formerly belonged to the late count of Boulogne.

Henry, being thus freed from all domeſtic diſturbances, began to turn his attention to regulate the interior police of his dominions.

With this view he ſent two writs into Ireland, by one of which he eſtabliſhed the courteſy of England in that kingdom, and by the other, he ordered all perſons who ſhould continue forty days contumacious, under the ſentence of excommunication, to be ſeized and kept in cuſtody, until ſatisfaction ſhould be made to the church. Theſe regulations were ſoon followed by another writ, enjoining all the Engliſh laws and cuſtoms to be obſerved in Ireland.

Towards the end of the year he made a progreſs to the North, and kept his Chriſtmas at York; where having received heavy complaints of the great defects in weights and meaſures, he ordered all the old ones to be deſtroyed, and new ones to be made in their place, aſcertaining the weight of bread, and fixing the meaſures for corn, wine and beer, and appointing ſevere penalties to be inflicted on all offenders.

At

At the same time he obtained a bull from Gregory IX. who, on the death of Honorius III. had succeeded to the papal throne, prohibiting all tilts and tournaments, which were generally no other than meetings of the factious and turbulent, who assembled, on these occasions, to form conspiracies, and to settle the proper measures for disturbing the peace of the realm.*

He likewise restored some privileges and immunities to the archbishop of Canterbury, which were supposed to have been possessed by his predecessors, and committed the castles of Dover, Canterbury, Rochester, and Montgomery to Hubert de Burgh, who was now created justiciary of England for life, with an annuity of twelve hundred marks.

This last grant is said to have been made for the defence of the kingdom, and by the advice of the nobility; and, indeed, it was attested by the earls of Lincoln, Pembroke, Gloucester, and Warenne, by three bishops and fifteen barons.

It was not long before Hubert was obliged to repair to the castle of Montgomery, which was closely besieged and vigorously pressed by the Welsh. Soon after, Henry himself set out in person with a strong body of

* A. D. 1228.

of forces, in order to chaſtiſe theſe troubleſome neighbours; but finding it impoſſible to reduce the enemy, who lurked in their woods and faſtneſſes, from whence they ſallied out upon his army with equal fury and ſucceſs, he was at laſt perſuaded to make an agreement with Llewellyn, upon receiving three thouſand marks to defray the expences of the expedition.

The archbiſhop of Canterbury dying on the ninth of July, the monks of Chriſt-church choſe one of their brothers, called Walter de Hemeſham, to ſucceed him in that ſee; but Henry refuſed to confirm his election, on pretence of his father's having been hanged as a common felon; and the ſuffragans of Canterbury would not acknowledge the new archbiſhop, becauſe he had debauched a nun, by whom he had ſeveral children, and had likewiſe been elected without their conſent or approbation.

Agents were immediately diſpatched to Rome with appeals to the pope, who, having examined the merits of the cauſe, annulled the election, and reſerved the nomination of another archbiſhop to himſelf. All the Engliſh envoys concurred in recommending Richard, chancellor of Lincoln, to this high dignity; and he being accordingly named by the pope, was conſecrated

at Canterbury by the biſhop of Rocheſter, before he had received his pall.

Richard was a man alike remarkable for the gracefulneſs of his perſon, the integrity of his life, and the extent of his learning; and therefore we may juſtly aſcribe his promotion to his own real and intrinſic merit; but M. Paris, who is frequently unhappy in his conjectures, ſuppoſes that the pope would not conſent to his nomination, until he had received a promiſe from the Engliſh agents, that he ſhould be gratified with a tenth of all moveables in England, Wales, and Ireland, in order to enable him to ſupport a war in which he was then engaged with the emperor of Germany.

But if we conſider that the cauſe did not begin to be heard in the Roman conſiſtory, which is extremely ſlow and dilatory in its proceedings, till the firſt of March;* that the pope's nuncio arrived in England, with this unreaſonable demand, on the twenty-ninth of April; and that, in that ſhort interval, the agents behoved to have ſent to the Engliſh court for freſh inſtructions; this ſuppoſition will appear to be altogether improbable.

The truth ſeems to be, Gregory was diſtreſſed for want of money, and, as the popes

* A. D. 1229.

popes were never remarkable for their modeſty, he probably thought this the beſt expedient for filling his coffers. The like demand had been made in France, where it had met with a ready compliance. The Engliſh clergy would fain have compounded for a groſs ſum, without allowing the nuncio to make a ſtrict enquiry into the effects of individuals; but from this method they were ſoon diverted, by the advice and example of one Stephen Seagrave, who was as ſelfiſh as he was wealthy, and was ſuppoſed to have been bribed by the nuncio.

This man readily offered to comply with the demand of his holineſs, in conſequence of which all the other members of the aſſembly, which was convoked on the occaſion, were at laſt perſuaded to acquieſce in the meaſure.

The nuncio had no ſooner obtained the conſent of the council, than he began to levy the tythe with great rigour and ſeverity. The people were obliged to pay ready money for the fruits of the earth, even while they were growing; the prelates and abbots were compelled to advance the tax for their inferior clergy; and as they could not conveniently raiſe the requiſite ſums, they were forced to pawn or ſell their plate to Italian uſurers, who ſupplied them with money, and had been brought into the

iſland by the nuncio for that very purpoſe.

But while all the reſt of the nation diſcovered ſuch a mean and puſillanimous ſpirit, in ſuffering themſelves to be robbed of their property by this religious freebooter, the earl of Cheſter maintained his own independance and the honour of the kingdom, and inſiſting on her prerogative of palatine, forbade the nuncio, or any of his agents, to ſet foot within his territories at their peril.

Notwithſtanding the care which the queen-mother of France had taken to compromiſe all diſputes and differences with the diſcontented nobility, a ſpirit of diſaffection and rebellion ſtill prevailed in ſeveral provinces.

Peter Mauclerc, count of Bretagne, thinking himſelf ill uſed in a treaty which he had lately made with the regent, applied to England for aſſiſtance. At the ſame time the archbiſhop of Bourdeaux, and ſome other deputies, arrived with commiſſions from the nobility of Poitou, Guienne, and Normandy, inviting Henry into France, and promiſing to aſſiſt him with all their power and influence in recovering his foreign dominions.

Whether Henry was reſtrained by a regard for the truce which ſtill ſubſiſted between

tween France and England, or was influenced by the advice of his council, certain it is he declined the invitation.

It is moſt probable that he was actuated by the firſt of theſe motives, inaſmuch as the truce was no ſooner expired, than he undertook the expedition, and ſummoned all the nobility and gentlemen of England to attend him at Portſmouth.

There they aſſembled immediately after Michaelmas to an immenſe number, beſides a vaſt multitude of volunteers from Ireland, Wales, and Scotland.

But, according to M. Paris, the ſucceſs of this expedition was defeated by the neglect of Hubert de Burgh, the juſticiary, who had not provided a ſufficient number of ſhips for tranſporting ſuch a numerous army. The ſame author likewiſe informs us, that the king was ſo incenſed at Hubert, that he drew his ſword, and would have ſacrificed him on the ſpot, had he not been prevented by the other noblemen who were preſent.

But this is a circumſtance which can hardly be reconciled to the timorous diſpoſition of the king, who was ſcarce ever known to diſcover the leaſt ſpark of courage, or to that regard which he always expreſſed for the juſticiary, of whom he rather ſtood in awe.

The enterprize ſeems to have miſcarried for want of money to pay the ſoldiers, no tax having been laid for that purpoſe, except a ſmall talliage on the cities, towns, and demeſnes of the crown; and even that was not levied.

Beſides, the count of Bretagne arriving about this time, diſſuaded Henry from hazarding a voyage during the winter ſeaſon, and adviſed him to defer the expedition till the enſuing Eaſter.

The troops were accordingly diſmiſſed, and the count having obtained a grant of the honour of Richmond, for which he did homage to Henry, together with the ſum of five thouſand marks in ready money, returned to his own country. Soon after, Henry made a progreſs to the north, and paſſed the Chriſtmas-holidays at York, where he was viſited by Alexander, king of Scotland.

Mauclerc, elated with the aſſiſtance he had already received from the Engliſh court, and encouraged with the proſpect of ſtill greater ſuccours, ventured to publiſh a manifeſto, in which he repreſented his pretended grievances, and renounced his allegiance to the king of France, whom he refuſed any longer to acknowledge as his ſovereign.

Lewis

Lewis was ſo incenſed at this declaration, which was delivered to him on the thirtieth of January,* that he immediately fell into Anjou, where, after a ſiege of forty days, he took Angers, and would probably have reduced the whole province, had not the great lords, and other vaſſals of the crown, who were ſecretly in the intereſt of the count of Bretagne, abandoned his army, upon the expiration of their uſual term of ſervice.

Mean while, Henry having levied a ſcutage towards defraying the expences of another armament, ordered his forces to aſſemble at Reading, on the ſeventh of April; and embarking at Portſmouth about the latter end of the ſame month, landed on the third of May at St. Malo. There he was received, with great honours, by the count, who put him in poſſeſſion of ſeveral ſtrong places; and many of the nobility ſwore fealty to him, as to their lawful ſovereign.

Lewis, upon the firſt news of Henry's landing, had poſted his army in the neighbourhood of Angers, in order to watch the motions of the enemy, and oppoſe their irruption into Poitou; but ſeeing Henry did not move from Nantes, where he had taken up his quarters, he advanced to Ancenis on

* A. D. 1230.

on the Loire, which he inveſted and reduced.

While he was engaged in the ſiege of this place, he received the homage of Andrew de Vitré, Henry D'Avaugour, and Ralf de Fougeres, three of the principal noblemen of Brittany, who came to his camp for that purpoſe.

He afterwards made himſelf maſter of Ouden, and ſeveral other places in the neighbourhood of Nantes, without meeting with the leaſt interruption from Henry, who ſpent his time in riot and feaſting, as if he had come to the Continent for no other purpoſe than to take his diverſion.

The bad effects of this ſloth and inactivity was ſoon viſible, not only in the rapid progreſs which Lewis made in his conqueſts, but likewiſe in the great diminution of the Engliſh army, which was daily impaired by diſeaſe and ſickneſs, occaſioned by luxury, drunkenneſs, and other exceſſes.

Lewis, finding it impoſſible to provoke Henry to a battle, reſolved to employ his time in compromiſing all diſputes with his diſcontented nobility. With this view he quitted Anjou, and repaired to Compiegne, where, in a conference with the counts of Boulogne, Champagne, Flanders and Bar, he

he effected a thorough accommodation with theſe noblemen.

During his abſence, Henry received an invitation from Fulk and William Paynel, and about ſixty other knights, to invade Normandy; of which they aſſured him he might eaſily make himſelf maſter.

It is natural to ſuppoſe, that ſuch of the Norman nobility as had pretenſions to lands in England, might have been very willing to return to their obedience to the Engliſh crown, eſpecially if they had no poſſeſſions of an equal value in France, which they could have forfeited by their defection.

But the French government was ſo firmly eſtabliſhed in Normandy; the frontiers of the country were ſo well guarded; and the wiſe and vigorous meaſures of Lewis, were ſo greatly ſuperior to the weak, irreſolute, and timid conduct of Henry, that had a rebellion been actually raiſed, there was little reaſon to hope it would have been attended with ſucceſs.

Beſides, it could not be certainly inferred from the complaints of a few factious and diſcontented noblemen, that the whole country was ripe for an inſurrection. The lands in England too, which had formerly belonged to the Norman nobility, had been parcelled out among the Engliſh barons, and could not now be reſumed without giving occaſion

occaſion to great feuds and animoſities, and perhaps exciting a civil war.

Theſe were probably the motives which induced Hubert de Burgh to diſſuade Henry from liſtening to the ſuggeſtions of the Paynels.

There ſeems likewiſe to have been another reaſon for declining the invitation of the Norman nobility; there was actually a truce at that time ſubſiſting between France and England; and though it is impoſſible to aſcertain the preciſe time when this truce was concluded, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that it was made immediately after the reduction of Ancenis: certain it is, it did not expire till the twenty ninth of Auguſt, and it was then renewed, and continued in force till the eighth of September.

In theſe circumſtances, Henry could not employ his time to better purpoſe, than by marching into Guienne, where he received the homage of the nobility, and ſettled the affairs of that province. From thence he directed his march through Poitou, where, after having reduced the ſtrong caſtle of Mirebeau, he returned to Nantes on the twenty eighth of September.

The Engliſh army being now reduced to a very inconſiderable number, by ſickneſs, intemperance, and various other cauſes, Henry determined to return home, and accordingly

cordingly made an agreement with the count of Bretagne, by which he engaged to furniſh that nobleman with four hundred knights and one hundred horſe, as long as the war with France ſhould continue; and to pay him ſix thouſand marks immediately upon his arrival in England. Theſe articles being ratified and confirmed, Henry embarked without delay, and landed at Portſmouth on the twenty ſixth of October.

Such was the end of an expedition, undertaken with little prudence, proſecuted with leſs vigour, and attended with a prodigious expence of men and money. Gilbert earl of Glouceſter, Raymond de Burgh, Nigel de Moubray, and many other noblemen of the firſt diſtinction, loſt their lives in this inglorious campaign; and what rendered their deaths the more lamentable was, that they had not the conſolation of dying in the field of battle, that bed of honour to every true hero, but were cut off by accidents, or periſhed by diſeaſes, the natural conſequence of riot and luxury; whilſt others, by the bad œconomy that prevailed in the army, were reduced to ſuch extremities, that they were obliged to ſell their horſes, armour and equipage, in order to procure a ſubſiſtence.

Henry, in performing the articles of agreement with the count of Bretagne, was

even

even better than his word: he left behind him the earls of Cheſter, Albemarle, and Mareſchal, with a body of five hundred knights and a thouſand horſemen; war in thoſe days being chiefly carried on by ſlight ſkirmiſhes, and ſudden incurſions into the enemies country.

Henry was no ſooner departed from the Continent, than the Engliſh invaded Anjou, where they took Chateau Gontier, and Chateauneuf ſur Sarte, which they immediately diſmantled and reduced to aſhes.

They afterwards advanced to the frontiers of Normandy, hoping they ſhould be able to take poſſeſſion of the county of Avranches, which had formerly belonged to the anceſtors of the earl of Cheſter; but all they could do was to deſtroy the ſtrong caſtle of Pontorſon, the French army, which was greatly ſuperior in numbers, preventing their further progreſs.

William earl Mareſchal, dying about the beginning of April, * was ſucceeded in his honours and eſtate by his brother Richard, who, together with the earls of Cheſter and Albemarle, returned ſoon after to England, a truce having been concluded with France to continue for three years.

Henry's late abſence from his dominions had given occaſion to many diſturbances. The

* A. D. 1231.

The king of Connaught knowing that moſt of the Engliſh troops were employed in foreign parts, broke out into open rebellion, and invaded the lands of the Britiſh proprietors, which he continued to waſte with fire and ſword, until he was oppoſed by Geoffry de Morico juſticiary of Ireland, who took him priſoner, and routed his army with great ſlaughter.

Llewellyn too, prince of North-wales, had been guilty of many enormities. In the year 1228 he had taken William de Braouſe priſoner, in a ſkirmiſh near Montgomery, and had obliged him to pay the ſum of three thouſand marks before he would ſet him at liberty.

He had afterwards taken the ſame nobleman by ſurpriſe, and put him to a cruel and ignominious death, either actuated by a groundleſs ſuſpicion of his having corrupted the virtue of his wife during his captivity, or inſtigated by that inveterate hatred which he had ever born to his family.

To anſwer for theſe outrages, Henry had ſummoned Llewellyn to attend him at Shrewſbury, and for that purpoſe had furniſhed him with a ſafe-conduct; but the Welch prince, inſtead of repairing to the place appointed, invaded the Engliſh borders, and ravaged the country from Breck-

nock to Montgomery with great barbarity.

Henry, incenſed at the inſolence of the Welch prince, reſolved to march againſt him in perſon.* In order to defray the expences of this expedition, he obtained a grant of a new aid, amounting to a fortieth part of all the moveables of the clergy as well as laity. He likewiſe impoſed a ſcutage of three marks for every knight's fee upon the prelates and barons, though, at the ſame time, he iſſued a writ in favour of the former, declaring that this tax ſhould not be conſidered as a precedent for future exactions.

Thus ſupplied with money, he aſſembled his forces, and advanced to the borders of Wales, where he worſted the enemy in ſeveral petty rencounters; but finding it it impoſſible to reduce them entirely, as they ſheltered themſelves in their woods and faſtneſſes, he publiſhed a proclamation, inviting the Iriſh to invade Wales, and promiſing to inveſt them with ſuch lands of the Welch as they ſhould be able to get into their poſſeſſion: and the more effectually to encourage his friends, and intimidate his enemies, he applied to the pope, who ſent orders to his nuncio John de Ferentino, to excommunicate all perſons who

* A.D. 1231.

who ſhould dare to diſturb the peace of England.

Nevertheleſs, Llewellyn continued to hold out for a conſiderable time, chiefly at the inſtigation of the earl of Cheſter, who favoured his deſigns in private; but at laſt finding himſelf excommunicated in all the churches in England, and beſet by the enemy on every ſide, he was obliged to agree to a truce which was to laſt till the St. Andrew's day following, at which time it was renewed for one year longer.

Mean while, a diſpute aroſe between Hubert de Burgh, the chief juſticiary, and Richard archbiſhop of Canterbury, about the cuſtody of the caſtle of Tunbridge. The caſtle belonged to the family of Clare, to which it had been granted by the conqueror, in exchange for ſome lands in Normandy, and had ever ſince been held of the crown, and enjoyed by the heirs of that family.

Gilbert, earl of Glouceſter and Clare dying about the latter end of the laſt year, the caſtle was ſeized, in the king's name, by the chief juſticiary, who, at the ſame time, obtained the wardſhip of the young earl; but the archbiſhop of Canterbury claimed the cuſtody of the caſtle, on pretence of its having been held by his predeceſſors before the conqueſt.

The juſticiary was bound by the nature of his office to maintain the rights of the crown, and therefore refuſed to comply with the demand of the archbiſhop, who was ſo highly incenſed at the repulſe he received, that he excommunicated all thoſe who were concerned in detaining the effects of the church, and immediately ſet out for Rome to implore the protection of his holineſs.

But Hubert took care to counteract his purpoſe; he forthwith diſpatched Roger de Canteloup to lay an impartial account of the whole matter before his holineſs, who, after a full and candid hearing, was ſo well ſatisfied with the juſtice of the royal cauſe, that he iſſued a bull directed to all the prelates of England, forbidding them to excommunicate the king's juſticiaries, ſheriffs, or bailiffs for aſſerting the rights of the crown to caſtles and other poſſeſſions.

The archbiſhop dying in his return, the monks of Canterbury choſe Ralf de Neville, biſhop of Chicheſter and chancellor of the kingdom, for his ſucceſſor; and Henry was ſo well pleaſed with their choice, that he put him in immediate poſſeſſion of the temporalities of the ſee.

Ralf was a man of ſtrict juſtice, great courage, and inflexible integrity; but theſe qualities, which would have recommended him

him to the eſteem and approbation of every body elſe, rendered him leſs acceptable to the pope, who ſhrewdly ſuſpected, that ſhould he be advanced to the ſee of Canterbury, he would not fail to detach the Engliſh church from its dependence on the court of Rome.

He therefore declared his election null, and ordered the monks to chooſe a ſecond, and afterwards a third, both of whom were rejected for the ſame reaſon: at laſt they elected Edmund, treaſurer of the church of Saliſbury, who being choſen by the pope's own recommendation was duly confirmed.

The arbitrary manner in which the pope exerciſed his authority, in this as well as in many other inſtances, excited a general clamour through the whole kingdom againſt the practice of beſtowing benefices upon Italian prieſts, and inhibiting the biſhops and lay-paſtors to preſent natives, until thoſe foreigners ſhould be preferred.

The pope, ſenſible that there was but too much reaſon for the complaint, and that the Engliſh were not of a temper to put up with ſuch indignities, endeavoured, with his uſual addreſs, to compromiſe the matter in an amicable manner; he forthwith iſſued a bull, allowing patrons to preſent to churches, immediately upon the

death of the Italian incumbents; but this was a remedy too ſlow and dilatory to anſwer the impatient deſires of thoſe who had ſuffered by ſuch encroachments.

Aſſociations were immediately formed, and circular letters were ſent to all the biſhops and chapters, warning them againſt favouring ſuch practices for the future, on pain of having their houſes burned, and their farms deſtroyed.

The like penalties were denounced againſt all the religious houſes that farmed the livings of the Italians, in caſe they ſhould preſume to ſend any part of their rents into foreign countries; nor was it long before ſome of theſe menaces were actually put in execution.

One Cincio, a Roman clergyman, and prebendary of St. Paul's, was ſeized in the neighbourhood of St. Albans, by a number of men in vizards, who kept him confined for the ſpace of five weeks, and at laſt obliged him to pay a conſiderable ranſom for his liberty. The barns of the Italian clergy were broke open, and their corn either diſtributed among the poor, or ſold in public; and if the civil magiſtrate offered to interpoſe, counterfeit warrants were produced by the rioters, who commonly appeared to the number of eighty on theſe occaſions.

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In this manner they proceeded for ſome time without oppoſition, and the Roman clergy were obliged to conſult their ſafety by flying to monaſteries and convents.

The pope, being informed of theſe outrages, wrote a letter to the king, in which he repreſented the good offices which himſelf and his predeceſſors had done to him and his father; complained bitterly of the violence offered to his miniſters and nuncios, one of whom had been cruelly murdered, and another left half dead on the ground, with their bulls trodden under foot, and their credentials torn in pieces; and finally inſiſted, that the king ſhould inflict an exemplary puniſhment upon the delinquents, otherwiſe he would excommunicate his perſon, and lay his dominions under an interdict.

Henry, alarmed at theſe menaces, appointed inquiſitions to be made in all the different parts of the kingdom, where thoſe outrages had been committed; and it ſoon appeared that they had been encouraged by men of all ranks and conditions; biſhops, abbots, knights, ſheriffs, and eſquires, being concerned in them either as actors or abettors; nor did the juſticiary himſelf eſcape the ſuſpicion of having connived at the pillage,

pillage, and protected the rioters from proſecution.

At laſt, Robert de Twange, a brave and handſome young knight, who, under the fictitious name of W. Wither, had headed the inſurgents, appeared in the king's preſence, and owned himſelf the ringleader in all theſe violent proceedings; declaring, at the ſame time, that what he had done was out of hatred to the Italians, who had endeavoured to deprive him of the only patronage he enjoyed, and that he would rather continue under the ſentence of excommunication for a time, than be thus robbed of his lawful property.

Henry was ſo much charmed with his genteel appearance, and his frank and ingenuous confeſſion, that he readily forgave him; and, as the ſentence of excommunication had been denounced by the biſhop of London, and ten other prelates, againſt all concerned in theſe riots, he adviſed him to go to Rome for abſolution, and furniſhed him with letters recommending him to the pope's indulgence.

Though Hubert was fully cleared, by the confeſſion of this young knight, from being actually concerned in the late diſturbances; yet bare ſuſpicion, however groundleſs, was abundantly ſufficient to accompliſh the ruin of a miniſter, already ſupplanted

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in the good graces of his ſovereign, by a new and worthleſs favourite. *.

Hubert was ſon to a brother of William Fitz-aldelme, who was ſteward of the houſhold, and governour of Ireland, under king Henry II. and from whom the great families of the Burghs, earls of Ulſter and Clanricard, are deſcended. Having early diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his parts and abilities, he was employed by Richard, and afterwards by John, who ſent him on an embaſſy to Liſbon, to negociate a treaty of marriage between him and a daughter of the king of Portugal.

In the third year of John's reign he was appointed chamberlain of the houſhold, warden of the Welſh marches, and governor of Dover caſtle. Soon after, when Normandy was invaded by the king of France, he was entruſted with the government of the caſtle of Falaiſe, the moſt important fortreſs in the lower part of that province; and it was while he commanded in this place, that he gave a noble proof of his juſtice, humanity, and independent ſpirit, by refuſing to execute the orders of his maſter, who had deſired him to put prince Arthur to death.

Being afterwards appointed governour of Chinon in Touraine, he maintained that fortreſs

* A. D. 1232.

fortreſs for a whole year, after all the reſt of the province had tamely ſubmitted to Philip; nor did he yield at laſt, until the enemy had taken the place by ſtorm, and he himſelf had been dangerouſly wounded in the aſſault. When Lewis of France, at the head of a numerous army of his own countrymen, and ſupported by moſt of the Engliſh nobility, invaded this kingdom, and overrun the whole country almoſt without oppoſition, it was Hubert, who, by his gallant defence of Dover caſtle, firſt checked the progreſs of his arms, and ſaved the nation from foreign ſlavery and uſurpation.

It was owing to his influence, that a ſquadron was fitted out by the Cinque Ports; and it was under his command, that it defeated the fleet of Euſtace le Maine, who was coming from France to the aſſiſtance of Lewis, who, being thus deprived of the expected ſuccours, was effectually prevented from proſecuting his conqueſts, and at laſt obliged to quit the kingdom.

Such were the important ſervices which Hubert had performed to his country; nor had he acquired more glory by his courage and intrepidity in the field, than by his juſtice and equity in the cabinet.

In all the civil poſts which he had filled, particularly that of chief juſticiary, and guardian

guardian of the realm, he had ever behaved with the moſt incorruptible integrity, and rigid impartiality, ſhowing himſelf, on all occaſions, the ſame zealous aſſerter of the prerogative of the crown, and the privileges of the people.

But the preſent age affords a melancholy proof of the truth of that old obſervation, that there never was a great man but what had many enemies. Little and narrow ſouls are always actuated by a ſpirit of envy, and, as they have not the leaſt hopes of being able to raiſe themſelves to the ſame degree of glory and renown with men of virtue and abilities, they therefore endeavour to bring every one down to their own level.

Among all thoſe who endeavoured to undermine the influence of the juſticiary, there was none that laboured with ſo much induſtry, or was ſo ſucceſsful in his attempts, as Peter de Roches, biſhop of Wincheſter, a man of great cunning and unbounded ambition, and better qualified for the camp than the pulpit.

John had raiſed him to the ſee of Wincheſter in the year 1205, and afterwards appointed him juſticiary of England, in order to humble the factious ſpirit of the barons.

With this view, Peter had exerciſed his authority in the moſt arbitrary and deſpotic man-

manner; he was considered as one of the most dangerous counsellors about the king's person, and was supposed to have been the chief promoter of those violent measures which drove the enraged barons into a rebellion that had well-nigh enslaved the nation.

It was natural to imagine that the treaty of Runnamede would deprive him of a power which he had so grosly abused; and accordingly Hubert was declared justiciary in his stead.

During the minority of Henry, indeed, Peter had been joined with Hubert in the regency of the kingdom; but as he would not concur with his colleague in any measure that was for the public good, the great council of the nation vested the regency in Hubert alone.

The haughty prelate could not brook this indignity, and from that time conceived an implacable hatred against his rival; and as he was just returned from Palestine, whether he had gone upon his disappointment, and where he had acquired some military glory, he resolved to exert his utmost efforts in effecting the ruin of Hubert.

The first step to be taken for this purpose, was to insinuate himself into the good graces of Henry; and as the young king

was

was extremely fond of pomp and feasting, he invited him to pass the Christmas-holidays at Winchester, where he entertained him with a splendour and magnificence, which, though it would have disgusted a prince possessed of the least sagacity and penetration, entirely captivated the mind of this silly and youthful monarch.

Peter having thus wriggled himself into the favour of his prince, employed his time to so good purpose, that he soon prevailed upon him to deprive Hubert of the office of justiciary, and of all the castles he held in the kingdom, except that of Dover, which he had so nobly defended, and to bestow all his employments upon one Stephen de Seagrave, an itinerant justice. At the same time, Hubert was stript of the earldom of Kent, and of all the lands which had been formerly granted him as a reward for his services.

A discarded minister has seldom any friends to support him in his disgrace; and Hubert now found himself deserted by all the world, except by Luke, archbishop of Dublin, and Ralf de Neville, bishop of Chichester, and chancellor of the realm, two prelates, the most distinguished for their virtue and abilities of any in the kingdom.

His zeal in maintaining the rights of the crown, in oppoſition to the exorbitant demands of the factious nobility, and his courage and reſolution in purſuing ſuch meaſures as he judged moſt conducive to the welfare of the nation, without regarding the clamours and complaints of the giddy populace, had expoſed him to the hatred of all thoſe who preferred their own intereſt to that of the public; and all theſe embraced the preſent opportunity of wreaking their vengeance on a man given up by his maſter to the rage and cruelty of his enemies.

But never did the integrity of any man obtain a more complete triumph. Notwithſtanding the malice and virulence with which he was proſecuted, his enemies could not fix upon him a ſingle crime, and hardly even a ſingle failing, that could leſſen his character in the opinion of any candid and impartial judge.

He had enjoyed the office of juſticiary for the ſpace of eighteen years, during which he had been entruſted with the management of public affairs, and yet in that long period he could not be convicted of having been guilty of one inſtance of injuſtice, and ſcarcely even of one act of imprudence. His conduct was

examined

examined with the utmoſt rigour and ſeverity; public notice was given to the world, that all perſons ſhould bring in their complaints againſt the juſticiary; and every profligate wretch was made to hope that by accuſing Hubert he ſhould make his fortune.

He was charged, indeed, with having embezzled certain ſums of money; but it appeared upon trial, that they had been collected by the proper officers, who had duly accounted for them, and received acquittances in the Exchequer.

In a word, no flaw could be found in his conduct, nor could any thing be urged againſt him but what was trifling, ridiculous, or evidently falſe; and he always declared himſelf ready to anſwer in the king's court, or to ſtand to the judgment of his peers, if any charge ſhould be brought againſt him.

But notwithſtanding the fiery trial which Hubert had lately ſtood, and from which his character had come forth more bright and unſullied than ever, he had every thing to fear from the implacable reſentment of the biſhop of Wincheſter, who, he well knew, would employ every art to effect his ruin.

The Welch having lately made ſome incurſions into the Engliſh territories, the

biſhop repreſented to Henry, what a ſhameful thing it was for a king of England to ſit quietly, and ſee his dominions ravaged by ſuch a contemptible enemy.

When Henry told him that the crown-revenue was hardly ſufficient to defray the expences of his houſhold, much leſs to maintain a war againſt his neighbours, Peter exclaimed loudly againſt the conduct of the miniſter, and laid the whole blame upon him, and the officers of the Exchequer.

An enquiry was accordingly made into the accounts of ſheriffs, bailiffs, and all others concerned in collecting the public money, in conſequence of which ſome frauds were diſcovered: Ralf Brito, treaſurer of the chamber, was fined in a thouſand pounds, and deprived of his poſt, which was immediately beſtowed upon Peter de Rivaux, nephew to the biſhop of Wincheſter, and, like him, of Poitevin extraction.

At the ſame time, in order to aſſiſt the crown in the preſent emergency, and to diſcharge the debts contracted by the late expedition into Brittany, a tax was laid upon all the prelates, barons, knights, freeholders, and copyholders in the kingdom, amounting to a fortieth part of their poſſeſſions, excepting ſuch goods as belonged

loned to hoſpitals, prebends, and pariſh churches.

Mean while, Hubert having received intimation that Peter had formed a deſign of bringing him to an ignominious death, fled to the priory of Merton in Surrey, hoping, by that means, to avoid the impending danger; and Henry, who by the falſe repreſentations and invidious ſuggeſtions of the biſhop of Wincheſter was now thoroughly exaſperated againſt the earl, ordered the mayor of London to force him from his retreat, either dead or alive.

This order being delivered in the evening, Roger Duke, the mayor, aſſembled the populace with the alarm bell; and having acquainted them with the purport of his majeſty's letter, commanded them to provide arms, ſo as to be ready to march in the morning to execute the king's order.

The mob received theſe directions with infinite pleaſure, as they ſtill retained an implacable hatred againſt Hubert, on account of the execution of their favourite leader Conſtantine, and accordingly diſperſed to make preparations for the enterprize.

Mean while, Andrew Buckerel, John Travers, and ſome other citizens, who ſeem to have had more juſt notions of or-

der and good government than either the king, his council, or the mayor, repaired to the biſhop of Wincheſter in Southwark, and even waked him from his ſleep, in order to aſk his advice in this difficult dilemma.

They repreſented to him the danger that might enſue not only to the church of Merton, but even to the city itſelf, from the ungoverned rage of ſuch a licentious multitude, who, in the height of their fury and reſentment, would not fail to plunder and demoliſh whatever came in their way, and to commit every ſpecies of barbarity and outrage. The prelate, inſtead of acting with that prudence and moderation, which became a man of his character, told them, that, let the conſequence be what it would, they ought to obey the king's order.

Animated by his advice, and prompted by their own reſentment, the mob, to the amount of twenty thouſand men, marched out in the morning, with arms in their hands, and colours flying, towards the church of Merton, where Hubert ſat on his knees before the altar, expecting his fate with the moſt heroic fortitude and pious reſignation.

But happily for Hubert and for the public peace, ſome members of the king's council

council had more prudence and discretion than the bishop of Winchester. The earl of Chester, though a professed enemy of Hubert, was nevertheless so deeply affected with the imminent danger to which he was exposed, and so apprehensive of the fatal consequences of such riotous proceedings, that he prevailed upon the king to send a counter-order to the mayor of London; and this, by the care of the bishop of Chichester, was dispatched with so much expedition, that it arrived in time enough to check the fury of the mob, who returned to the city extremely chagrined at their disappointment.

The archbishop of Dublin, who never deserted Hubert in his distress, persuaded the king to grant him time to prepare for his trial; and letters patent were accordingly issued for that purpose. Trusting to the protection of this indulgence, the earl set out for St. Edmunsbury on a visit to his wife; and Henry, imagining that he intended to escape, sent a body of three hundred men, under the command of Godfrey de Craucombe, to seize him on the road, and bring him back to the tower.

Hubert was found in the chapel of Brentwood, with a cross in one hand and the sacrament in the other; but, these being wrested from him, he was dragged from the

the chapel, treated with great barbarity, and his feet being chained under the horſe's belly, conveyed to priſon like a common felon.

Such indignities offered to a nobleman, who had ſerved his country with equal fidelity and ſucceſs, affected the very populace who beheld the ſcene; even a blackſmith, whom Craucombe deſired to faſten the fetters, refuſed the employment with a noble diſdain, and made an affecting ſpeech on the occaſion.

Next morning, Roger biſhop of London repaired to court, to complain of this breach of the church's privileges; and threatened all concerned in it with excommunication, unleſs the earl were immediately ſet at liberty. In conſequence of this remonſtrance, Hubert was reconveyed to the place from whence he had been taken; but Henry, piqued at the biſhop's preſumption (as he thought it) and enflamed with reſentment againſt the earl, ordered the ſheriffs of Hertford and Eſſex, to raiſe the poſſe of theſe counties, and beſet the place in ſuch a manner, that he ſhould neither be able to make his eſcape, nor receive any ſupply of proviſions: at the ſame time he ſtrictly forbade all his courtiers to intercede in his behalf, or ſo much as to mention his name.

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The alternative offered to Hubert was, that he ſhould either abjure the realm, ſubmit to perpetual impriſonment, or acknowledge himſelf a traitor; but the earl, conſcious of his own innocence, refuſed to accept of ſuch inglorious terms; and after having been pent up in the chapel for more than a month, and almoſt ſtarved for want of proviſions, he came out, and ſurrendered himſelf to the ſheriff, who conducted him back to London in fetters, and delivered him up to the conſtable of the Tower.

During his confinement in this place, Henry received information that he had a conſiderable treaſure depoſited in the hands of the knights templars, and demanded it of the maſter, who refuſed to deliver it without Hubert's order, which was no ſooner deſired than granted.

This ready compliance ſeems to have had a conſiderable effect upon Henry's temper; for, though the treaſure furniſhed Hubert's enemies with a pretence for charging him with fraud and extortion, and for urging the king to proceed againſt him with the utmoſt ſeverity, he abſolutely refuſed to grant their requeſt, declaring, that he would never conſent to the death of a man, who had ſerved his uncle, his father, and himſelf, with ſuch remarkable fidelity.

Hubert's

Hubert's friends did not fail to improve this favourable diſpoſition in the king; a compoſition was immediately propoſed, and accepted, by which the earl, after having conveyed to Henry all his perſonal eſtate, and the lands he held of the crown, was allowed to retain ſuch parts of his fortune, as he had either derived from his anceſtors, or acquired by purchaſe; and in order to prevent, as much as poſſible, any future rupture, the earls of Cornwall, Warenne, Pembroke, and Lincoln, became ſureties for his good behaviour; though, at the ſame time, he was commanded to remain in the caſtle of the Devizes, under the cuſtody of four knights, until he ſhould either aſſume the habit of a templar (which as he was a married man he could not do at preſent) or be acquitted by the general conſent of the nobility.

The biſhop of Wincheſter, having thus deſtroyed the intereſt of Hubert, and engroſſed the entire confidence of his maſter, perſuaded the king to purſue ſuch meaſures as could not fail to expoſe him to the hatred and reſentment of the nation, and at laſt involved him in the ſame diſgrace which he had now brought upon his rival. *

He aſſured Henry, that few of the Engliſh nobility were well affected to his perſon or

* A. D. 1233.

or government; and that he could never render himself independent, while they enjoyed the great offices of the kingdom. He therefore advised him to lessen their power and influence, by depriving them of their lucrative posts and employments, which he might safely bestow upon foreigners, who would always obey him with the most unreserved submission.

Henry, like a weak and wicked prince as he was, at once believed his suggestions, and followed his advice. While he was passing the Christmas-holidays at Worcester, he deprived Walter bishop of Carlile of the office of high-treasurer, and of several other places which, by letters patent, he had obtained for life. At the same time he affronted Richard earl Mareschal, by displacing Sir William de Rodune, his lieutenant in that office, and knight-marshall of the household.

In a word, all the members of the council, whether prelates, earls, barons or others, were discarded so suddenly and so unexpectedly, that, in a short time, Henry had hardly any counsellors about his person, except the bishop of Winchester, and his nephew Rivaux, who, together with Stephen Seagrave the justiciary, and Robert de Passelewe the vice-treasurer, engrossed the whole administration.

Invitations

Invitations were ſent to the Bretons and Poitevins to come over to England, and ſhare the ſpoils of the nation; and theſe needy and rapacious foreigners did not fail to embrace the opportunity: upwards of two thouſand of their knights, eſquires, &c. flocked to this country with their arms and horſes, where they were taken into immediate pay, and diſtributed through the kingdom to garriſon the forts and caſtles. They obtained the cuſtody of counties and baronies, and were even entruſted with the wardſhip of minors, by which they procured advantageous matches, to the prejudice of the natives.

In vain did the Engliſh barons apply to Henry for a redreſs of theſe grievances. The biſhop of Wincheſter, either denied them acceſs to his majeſty, or rendered their application ineffectual; and, leſt his brethren the clergy ſhould make remonſtrances on the ſame ſubject, he inſpired the king with ſuch a jealouſy and ſuſpicion of all of that order, that he avoided their preſence, as if they had been his declared enemies. Such are the methods commonly uſed by worthleſs and wicked miniſters, to curry the favour of a weak and ſimple prince, and to obtain an unbounded influence and authority, which they never fail to abuſe, to the aggrandizement of their own family, the

oppreſſion

oppreſſion of their fellow ſubjects, and the deſtruction of the rights and liberties of the nation.

Theſe odious meaſures could not be long continued without producing a general ſpirit of diſcontent in the kingdom; but theſe ſymptoms of diſſatisfaction, inſtead of being aſcribed to their real cauſe, were only conſidered by Henry as a further confirmation of thoſe rebellious diſpoſitions with which Wincheſter had charged the Engliſh nobility.

At laſt the barons, whoſe patience was entirely exhauſted by the injuries and inſults they daily received from theſe inſolent foreigners, formed themſelves into a body, and putting the earl Mareſchal at their head, reſolved to demand ſatisfaction of their ſovereign in a more open and peremptory manner.

Accordingly the earl complained to his majeſty of the many grievances under which the Engliſh laboured, adding, that ſhould he continue, as he had lately done, to laviſh his favours, and beſtow all his confidence upon ſtrangers, to the neglect of his natural ſubjects, the barons would be obliged to concert ſome meaſures for delivering the nation from theſe rapacious interlopers.

Wincheſter, who was preſent at this conference, replied with his uſual aſſurance,

that the king might call in what foreigners he thought proper for the defence of his crown, and that, if thoſe who were already in the kingdom were not ſufficient to reduce the Engliſh to obedience, others ſhould be immediately brought over for that purpoſe.

Such a haughty and arrogant declaration, could not fail to inflame the reſentment of the Engliſh nobility: they forthwith retired from court, and began to form aſſociations, binding themſelves by the moſt ſolemn oaths, to ſupport one another in the defence of their liberties, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.

Had Henry allowed himſelf to reflect on the fate of his father, he muſt at once have perceived the terrible precipice upon which he ſtood; but the biſhop of Wincheſter induſtriouſly ſhut his eyes againſt every proſpect of danger, and buoyed him up with the hopes of being able to defend himſelf by the aſſiſtance of the Poitevins, Bretons, and other foreigners, who flocked over in ſuch numbers, that they almoſt overſpread the kingdom.

A parliament being appointed to be held at Oxford, the barons were ſummoned to attend; but they refuſed to expoſe themſelves to the inſults and treachery of perfidious foreigners. They received a ſecond and a third

third ſummons, with promiſe of obtaining redreſs of all their grievances; but hearing that immenſe numbers of aliens arrived daily with military accoutrements, they ſent a deputation to the king, in which they inſiſted that he ſhould remove the biſhop of Wincheſter, and his Poitevins, from his councils and kingdom for ever; otherwiſe they ſhould be obliged to expel him from the throne, and beſtow the crown of England upon ſome other prince more worthy of ſuch an exalted ſtation.

Henry himſelf was ſtartled at this declaration; but the biſhop ſoon diſpelled his fears, by magnifying his own military capacity, and adviſed him to reduce his rebellious ſubjects by force of arms, and beſtow their honours, caſtles, and eſtates upon the Poitevins, who would ſerve him with a more inviolable fidelity, and a more perfect ſubmiſſion.

This wicked and pernicious advice was but too readily followed. Gilbert Baſſet being deprived of a manor which had been granted to him by king John, applied to Henry for redreſs; but, inſtead of obtaining his requeſt, he was branded with the odious appellation of traitor, and ordered to quit the court immediately, on pain of being hanged without form or trial; his brother-in-law, Richard Siward, was im-

priſoned; on pretence of having married without a licence from the king; and all the ſuſpected noblemen in the kingdom, were commanded to deliver hoſtages for their good behaviour.

A parliament being ſummoned to meet on the firſt of Auguſt, the barons attended with an armed force for the ſecurity of their perſons; but the earl Mareſchal, having received intelligence from his ſiſter, the counteſs of Cornwall, of a treacherous deſign againſt his life, retired into Wales.

As the abſence of this nobleman, together with that of Gilbert Baſſet, prevented the other barons from coming to any fixt reſolution, Wincheſter and Seagrave adviſed the king to ſummon all his military tenants to meet him in arms at Glouceſter, on the fourteenth of Auguſt. The earl Mareſchal, and the other confederate lords, refuſed to obey the ſummons; in revenge for which refuſal, they were proſcribed as traitors, their towns were burned, their caſtles beſieged, their parks deſtroyed, and their eſtates given to the Poitevin mercenaries.

It is not likely that the biſhop of Wincheſter would have proceeded to ſuch extremities, had he not found means to draw over to his intereſt the earls of Cheſter and Lincoln, by a ſeaſonable bribe of a thouſand

ſand marks: beſides, the earl of Cornwall, who at firſt engaged in the cauſe of the barons, had lately returned to the party of his brother.

Deſerted by theſe three noblemen, the earl Mareſchal engaged in a league with Llewellyn, prince of Wales, and the noblemen of that country, who, for ſome time paſt, had been but upon very indifferent terms with the Engliſh; and they all bound themſelves, by a mutual oath, not to make peace but by the common conſent of the whole confederacy.

Mean while, Baldwin, count de Guiſnes, arrived at Dover, with a ſtrong body of Flemings, who joined the king at Glouceſter; and Henry, ſtrengthened by this reinforcement, advanced to Hereford, in order to beſiege one of the Mareſchal's caſtles.

The garriſon defended it with ſo much courage, that the beſiegers began to be in want of proviſion; and as the king had no hopes of taking it by ſtorm, and yet was aſhamed to be baffled in the attempt, he ſent ſome prelates to treat with the earl, who agreed to ſurrender the place, on a ſolemn promiſe that it ſhould be reſtored in a fortnight, and that every grievance ſhould be redreſſed in the enſuing parliament, which was ſum-

moned to meet in the beginning of October.

Wincheſter and Seagrave ſwore to the performance of theſe articles; but, when the fortnight was expired, they were ſo regardleſs of their own oath, and their maſter's honour, that they abſolutely refuſed to fulfil their promiſe; nor was the caſtle reſtored, until it was beſieged and retaken by the Mareſchal.

Mean while, Hubert de Burgh, who had hitherto been confined in the caſtle of the Devizes, received intimation from a friend at court, that the biſhop of Wincheſter had formed a deſign to deprive him of life, and for that purpoſe had ſolicited the king for the government of the caſtle. Startled at this intelligence, he imparted the ſecret to two of the garriſon who attended upon him; and they were ſo deeply affected with the imminent danger to which he was expoſed, that they reſolved to aſſiſt him in making his eſcape.

Accordingly, while one of them ſtood ſentry, the other took him on his back, fettered as he was, and, carrying him to the pariſh-church, laid him down before the altar; but thither he was ſoon purſued by a party of ſoldiers, who, after having buffeted him with great cruelty, conducted

ducted him back to the place of confinement.

The biſhop of Saliſbury, in whoſe dioceſe the place lay, being informed of this violation of the privileges of the church, demanded Hubert of the governor; and, upon his refuſal to deliver him up, excommunicated the whole garriſon. He then complained to the king of the unwarrantable conduct of the governor, and, being ſeconded in his remonſtrance by the biſhop of London, and other prelates, he prevailed upon Henry to order the earl to be carried back to the place from whence he had been taken. The church, however, was ſurrounded with ſuch a ſtrong guard, that he would ſoon have been ſtarved to death, had he not been reſcued by Richard Siward, and ſome armed friends, with whom he retired into Wales, and joined the earl of Pembroke.

The parliament, in which all the grievances of the nation were propoſed to be redreſſed, met at Weſtminſter according to appointment, and earneſtly beſought the king to be reconciled to his barons. The clergymen too, who preached before his majeſty, inculcated the ſame doctrine, and exclaimed with great vehemence againſt the practice of proſecuting Engliſh noblemen without

without form or trial, and treating them as rebels and traitors.

The bishop of Winchester not only pretended to justify the king's conduct, but had even the impudence to assert, that English barons were not entitled to the same privileges with the nobility of France; and that the king might condemn their persons, and seize their estates, by the sentence of his justiciaries.

This false and insolent assertion provoked the bishops to such a degree, that they rose up to a man, and threatened to excommunicate all the king's counsellors by name, particularly Winchester, Rivaux, Seagrave, and Passelewe; and when Winchester told told them that he was exempted from their jurisdiction, as having been consecrated by the pope, to whom he appealed from any step they should take to his prejudice, they denounced a general sentence against all those who either alienated the king's affections from his subjects, or disturbed the peace of the kingdom; nay they discovered such a firm and determined spirit, that, though Henry pressed them to excommunicate the earl Mareschal for retaking his castle, they absolutely refused to comply with his request; adding, that it would be highly unjust to censure a man for recovering his own property.

Henry

Henry finding it impoſſible to ruin the Mareſchal by his ſecret intrigues and artifices, reſolved to attack him in the field, and accordingly ordered his troops to aſſemble at Glouceſter on the ſecond of November. From thence he directed his march into Wales; but the earl having taken the precaution to drive away the cattle, his army was, in a ſhort time, ſo deſtitute of forage and proviſion, that he was obliged to retire into Monmouthſhire, to prepare magazines for the ſubſiſtence of his forces.

The earl being informed that the king, and his principal officers, had taken up their quarters in the caſtle of Groſmont, while his troops lay in the open plain, attacked them in the night with ſuch fury and impetuoſity, that he routed them at the firſt onſet, took above five hundred horſes, and carried off a prodigious booty, beſides all the plate and baggage of the courtiers. Many of thoſe, who had loſt their equipage in this action, abandoned the royal army, and retired to their own eſtates.

Henry finding himſelf thus deſerted, committed the caſtle of Monmouth to the care of Baldwin de Guiſnes, and then returned to Glouceſter, where he paſſed the Chriſtmas-holidays. During his abode at this place, ſeveral ſkirmiſhes happened between the Poitevins and the forces of the Mareſchal,

chal, in which the latter were always victorious; and the earl having over-run the whole country, as far as Shrewſbury, remained maſter of the field, until he was called into Ireland about the enſuing Candlemas.*

This journey was occaſioned by a villainous ſcheme of the biſhop of Wincheſter, who, finding it impoſſible to conquer him by open force, or to ruin him by ſecret artifice, at leaſt in England, had formed a deſign of taking him off by treachery in Ireland.

With this view he had written letters, in the king's name, to Maurice Fitz-gerald, the juſticiary, Walter and Hugh de Lacy, Richard de Burgh, Geoffry de Mareis, and and others who were vaſſals of the earl Mareſchal. In theſe letters he gave them to underſtand, that as the earl had been deprived, by a ſentence of the king's court, of all his eſtates and honours in England, if they could, by any means, draw him over into Ireland, and ſeize him either dead or alive, all his fortune in this laſt country, ſhould be divided among them.

Wincheſter undertook for the punctual performance of this promiſe; but the Iriſh noblemen, though they had no objection to the propoſal, would not engage in the enterprize,

* A. D. 1234.

terprize, until they had obtained a patent to confirm the partition; and this was no ſooner granted, than they began to waſte the lands of the earl, hoping, by this means, to draw him over to Ireland.

This expedient had the deſired effect: Richard immediately ſet out for that country, accompanied only by fifteen knights, and at his landing was received by Geoffry de Mareis, with all the exterior marks of the moſt perfect zeal and attachment, but with a real deſign of betraying him to his enemies.

This traitor pretended to raiſe troops for his ſervice; and having, by his art and addreſs, inveigled him into a parley with the conſpirators, immediately abandoned him with all his followers, in conſequence of which the earl received a mortal ſtab in the back, and, after having languiſhed about a fortnight, expired on the fourteenth of April. Such was the unworthy fate of one of the greateſt and moſt accompliſhed noblemen in England, not more diſtinguiſhed by his birth and fortune, than by his probity, valour, juſtice, generoſity, and every other virtue that can conſtitute the character of the hero and the patriot. His lands were divided among the conſpirators, who, nevertheleſs, were not long allowed to enjoy their ill-got poſſeſſions.

By

By this time the biſhop of Wincheſter, and the other foreign miniſters, had filled up the meaſure of their iniquity, and were now tottering on the brink of ruin. Their profeſſed animoſity againſt the Engliſh barons, whom they oppreſſed in the moſt cruel and arbitrary manner; their partial attachment to their own countrymen, whom they advanced to all places of profit and honour; and their violent and pernicious meaſures, ſo deſtructive of the liberty of the ſubject, and ſo evidently calculated to impoveriſh and enſlave the nation, had all conſpired to render them the objects of univerſal hatred and deteſtation; but as general complaints produced little or no effect, the honour of freeing the kingdom from theſe odious vermin was reſerved for the clergy alone.

In a parliament, which was convoked at Weſtminſter on Candlemas-day, the king charged ſeveral biſhops, particularly Alexander of Litchfield, with being engaged, in concert with the earl Mareſchal and the rebellious barons, to deprive him of his crown.

Alexander, incenſed at this imputation of diſloyalty, and in order to vindicate himſelf from ſuch an odious charge, immediately roſe up, and, in a moſt ſolemn manner, excommunicated all thoſe who were either concerned in that treaſonable attempt, or dared

dared to throw ſuch an aſperſion upon the characters of the prelates.

Edmund, elect of Canterbury, who was no leſs enraged at the indignity offered to his order, and was greatly encouraged by the ſpirited behaviour of Alexander, repaired to court with his ſuffragans, and expoſtulated warmly with his majeſty upon the folly and imprudence of his conduct. He explained to him the dangerous tendency of thoſe meaſures, to which he had been inſtigated by the wicked advice of his miniſters: he accuſed Peter, biſhop of Wincheſter, as the author of thoſe pernicious counſels, which had ſhaken the throne and ſhortened the days of the late king, and been the occaſion of all the diſturbances that had happened during the preſent reign: he repreſented, in the ſtrongeſt colours, the extreme danger of committing the cuſtody of his own ſiſter, and Eleanor of Brittany, together with his treaſure, and the chief fortreſſes of the kingdom, to the care of foreign mercenaries, who, by their conduct, appeared to be altogether unworthy of any confidence: he recapitulated the hardſhips under which the people laboured; and, finally, inſiſted on a ſpeedy redreſs of all theſe grievances, by an immediate change of meaſures and miniſters; otherwiſe he

would excommunicate him, and all his adherents.

Henry, confounded at the boldneſs of the prelate, and convinced, in a great meaſure, of the truth of what he had ſaid, deſired ſome time to deliberate on a matter of ſo much importance; aſſuring him, that every thing ſhould be ſpeedily ſettled to his entire ſatisfaction.

In the next parliament, which met on the ninth of April, Edmund, who had been conſecrated the preceding Sunday, renewed his addreſs with greater authority, and with all the ſucceſs that he and the other prelates could poſſibly deſire. The biſhop of Winchester was diſmiſſed from court, and ſent to his dioceſe; Peter Rivaux was deprived of his poſt of high-treaſurer, and ordered to give up his accounts, together with the caſtles in his cuſtody; Seagrave was ſtripped of his office of juſticiary; the Poitevins were diveſted of their governments, and commanded to quit the kingdom; and the Engliſh prelates and noblemen were readmitted into the privy-council.

This change of miniſters, was immediately followed by a change of meaſures: the biſhops of Canterbury, Litchfield, and Rocheſter, were ſent as ambaſſadors, to conclude a peace with Llewellyn and the earl Mareſchal; and Henry himſelf ſet out for Glou-

Glouceſter, that he might be at hand to forward the negociation. In his way to that city, he received the news of Pembroke's death, and, notwithſtanding the virulence with which he had proſecuted that nobleman, he could not refrain from tears, when he reflected on his many good and amiable qualities, and underſtood the baſe and treacherous manner in which he had been betrayed.

Llewellyn agreed to the propoſals of peace, on condition that the exiled barons who had eſpouſed his cauſe, ſhould be indulged with a pardon, and reſtored to their eſtates. Theſe terms were readily granted; and all of them repaired to court, where they were graciouſly received by the king, particularly Hubert de Burgh, whom his majeſty diſtinguiſhed with particular marks of his favour. All the outlawries which had been denounced againſt that nobleman, were, by proclamation, declared null and void: he recovered his honours and eſtate, and his former intereſt and favour with his maſter: Gilbert Baſſet and Richard Siward were reinſtated in their poſſeſſions; and all of them were created privy-counſellors; Gilbert, brother to the late earl of Pembroke, was inveſted with all his lands both in England and Ireland; and Henry having conferred upon

him the honour of knighthood, delivered into his hands the mareſchal's ſtaff in a parliament at Worceſter.

As it was now reſolved to commence a proſecution againſt the late miniſters, Edmund, archbiſhop of Canterbury, produced copies of the letters which they had written to the Iriſh noblemen for the deſtruction of the earl of Pembroke. The recital of theſe forgeries, which were publickly read, filled the whole audience with horror and indignation, and every one called out for vengeance on the authors of ſuch a complicated ſcene of treachery and barbarity.

Theſe miſcreants were accordingly ſummoned to appear in court at Midſummer, to anſwer for this crime as well as other acts of male-adminiſtration; but conſcious of their guilt, and dreading the puniſhment they ſo largely deſerved, Wincheſter and Rivaux took ſanctuary in the cathedral of Winton; Seagrave fled to the church of St. Mary Newark in Leiceſter; and Paſſelewe, concealed himſelf in a cellar in London.

Edmund, who was a prelate of great piety and moderation, and extremely averſe from all violent meaſures, prevailed upon the king to grant them a ſafe-conduct, in conſequence of which they came forth from

from their places of retreat, and appeared in court to take their trial.

Peter de Rivaux, who was firſt examined, was dreſſed in the habit of a clergyman, under which he wore a coat of mail, and a ſtilletto. He denied none of the crimes that were laid to his charge, but fell on his knees and ſued for mercy; and with regard to wardſhips, eſcheats, and other branches of the royal revenue, which belonged to his poſt of high-treaſurer, he deſired time to regulate his accounts. His requeſt was granted; but his lay-poſſeſſions were ſequeſtered, and his perſon, after having been confined in the Tower for two days, was committed to the care of the archbiſhop, who ſent him to the cathedral of Wincheſter.

Seagrave, among other things, was accuſed by Henry of having adviſed him to put to Hubert de Burgh to death, and baniſh the nobility. He and Paſſelewe, treaſurer of the Exchequer, alledged in their defence, that they only acted in conformity to the direction of their ſuperiors, to whom they were bound to pay an implicit obedience: they were each fined in a thouſand marks; and Seagrave was obliged to reſtore ſeveral manors which he had obtained from the crown.

As for the principal offender, Peter bishop of Winchester, he was screened from punishment by the sanctity of his character, and was sent abroad to renew the truce with France; but the pope, who was then at war with the citizens of Rome, and imagined that Peter's wealth and military talents might be of great service to his cause, summoned him into Italy in the beginning of the ensuing year.

As the truce with France had expired at Midsummer, and the overtures for renewing it proved unsuccessful, Henry sent a body of seventy knights, and two thousand infantry to the assistance of the count of Brittany, who, thus reinforced, obtained some petty advantages over the French, of which, however, he was soon deprived.

Lewis having raised a prodigious army, and divided it into three bodies, each of them more than sufficient to crush the forces of Brittany, invaded that county in three different quarters at once; and the count, unable to oppose the progress of his victorious enemy, was obliged to submit to such terms as the conqueror thought proper to prescribe; which were no other than an absolute surrender of all his territories, though, in order to save his honour in appearance, and mitigate the severity of his fate, he was indulged with a truce till the first

of

of November, at which time, if he ſhould not be relieved by the king of England in the interim, he was to renounce his homage and allegiance to Henry, and deliver up all his towns and forts to Lewis, who was immediately put in poſſeſſion of three of the ſtrongeſt caſtles in the country, as a ſecurity for the performance of articles.

Lewis was too well acquainted with the ſituation of England, to apprehend any danger from that quarter; and indeed the count himſelf ſeems to have had little hopes of receiving any ſuccours from thence, inaſmuch as he ſent back the Engliſh forces that were already in his ſervice.

However, he came over to England before the execution of his treaty with Lewis, not ſo much with a view of procuring a reinforcement of troops, as a ſupply of money, having laid out, as he himſelf alledged, no leſs than fifteen thouſand marks in defending his territories, and maintaining the honour of the Engliſh crown.

Henry told him he had found, by fatal experience, that all the treaſure of England would not be ſufficient to protect his country from the ambition of Lewis, and that he was reſolved, for the future, to embark in

no

no more ſchemes of ſuch a romantic and expenſive nature.

Thus repulſed, the count returned to his own country, and made his ſubmiſſion to Lewis,* after having renounced his allegiance to Henry, to whom, at the ſame time, he ſent a formal notification of the ſtep he had taken. In conſequence of this, he was deprived of the honour of Richmond, and of all the lands he poſſeſſed in England; and this loſs co-operating with his other misfortunes, reduced him to ſuch a degree of deſpair, that he turned pirate on the high-ſeas, and intercepted all the Engliſh veſſels that fell in his way.

While Lewis was thus employed in reducing Brittany under his dominion, the Engliſh council were buſy in regulating the interior police of the nation: all places of ſtrength in the kingdom were committed to the care of Engliſh noblemen, well affected to their king and country: the limits between the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers were diſtinctly aſcertained, ſo as to prevent any interference or confuſion; and proclamations were iſſued, commanding all perſons to obſerve the two charters of liberties under the ſevereſt penalties.

In

* This meaſure was ſo diſagreeable to his ſubjects, that they gave him the nick-name of "Mauclerc," or bad ſcholar.

In the beginning of the enſuing year,* Henry, by the advice of his council, indulged the parochial clergy with a grant of the tythes of hay and mills in all the royal demeſnes: he remitted to the pope, with great punctuality, the tribute which had been granted by his father; and, by the mediation of his holineſs, another truce, for five years, was concluded with France, Hugh, count de la March, being gratified by Henry with an annuity of an eight hundred livres in lieu of the Iſle of Oleron to which he laid claim.

It was likewiſe owing to the good offices of the pope, that the king procured a new and powerful ally in the perſon of the emperour Frederic II. who demanded Henry's ſiſter Iſabel in marriage. The propoſal was readily accepted; the articles of contract were preſently ſettled; and the prelates and barons granted a ſcutage of two marks a knight's fee, by which the ſum of thirty thouſand marks was levied as a portion for the young princeſs, who was immediately ſent with a ſplendid retinue into Germany, where ſhe was received with the utmoſt magnificence, and the nuptials celebrated at Worms, with great pomp, in preſence of four kings, eleven dukes, thirty marquiſſes, and earls, beſides an incredible number of prelates and gentlemen.

Henry

* A. D. 1235.

Henry having thus disposed of his sister, began to think upon a match for himself. His council had frequently advised him to such a step, and several overtures had been made for that purpose; but some impediment or other had always prevented the conclusion of the marriage. The first treaty of this kind seems to have been begun in the year one thousand two hundred and twenty four, for a match between him and Yolante, daughter of the count of Brittany; but the parties being related within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity, and the pope refusing to grant a dispensation, the scheme did not take effect. Another treaty was set on foot in the ensuing year, for a marriage between him and a daughter of the duke of Austria; but that project proved as abortive as the former; nor was an overture which was made about two years after, for a match with a daughter of the king of Bohemia, attended with better success. He afterwards formed a design of espousing Margaret, second daughter of William, late king of Scotland; but the alliance was prevented by the remonstrances of the nobility, who represented the disgrace that would attend a marriage with the younger sister of his justiciary's wife. *

He

* The eldest daughter of William was married to Hubert de Burgh, who was then justiciary of England.

He then projected a match with Jane, daughter to the count of Ponthieu, and this treaty was carried to a greater length than any of the others; the contract was actually ſettled, and ambaſſadours even diſpatched to Rome to obtain the pope's diſpenſation; but Lewis, whoſe intereſt it was to prevent the county of Ponthieu from being united to the crown of England, threatened the count with the confiſcation of all his territories, unleſs he would immediately put a ſtop to the intended alliance, and the count, intimidated with this menace, was obliged to retract his promiſe.

Baffled in all theſe attempts, Henry, at laſt, made an overture of marriage to Eleanor, ſecond daughter to Raymond Berenger count of Provence; and the propoſal was readily accepted. The prelates and nobility were conſulted on the ſubject, and heartily approved of the alliance, the rather, as they thought it might be a means of preſerving a good underſtanding between Henry and Lewis, who had eſpouſed Margaret, Eleanor's eldeſt ſiſter.

The king himſelf was ſo fond of the match, that he empowered his ambaſſadors, to accept of any portion, from twenty to three thouſand marks; and at laſt gave them private inſtructions, to conclude the treaty without the payment of any money,

and

and conduct the bride into England. There she arrived in the beginning of the year, the nuptials were celebrated at Canterbury on the fourteenth of January, and on the Sunday following she was crowned at Westminster.

In the assembly, which was convoked for this coronation, several regulations were made for the public good: some articles relating to the dowers and wills of widows, the improvement of waste by lords of manors, the exemption of minors from paying usury for debts contracted by their fathers, the limitation of writs, and other points, were agreed upon by common consent, and drawn up in an ordinance, which, from the place where the parliament met, was called the statute of Merton.

It was likewise in this assembly, that the bishops made a motion for establishing a constitution of the canon law, by which all children born before the marriage of their parents should be deemed legitimate by that subsequent union; but, as such an innovation would affect the succession to titles and estates, and introduce confusion into families, the barons declared they would never alter the laws of England.

Nor was this the only instance in which they manifested their courage and resolution; for the emperour, having desired by his ambas-

ambaſſadours, that Richard earl of Cornwall might be ſent over to attack France, and recover the territories formerly poſſeſſed by the Engliſh, they abſolutely refuſed to comply with his requeſt, adding, that they would never allow the preſumptive heir of the crown to be expoſed to the dangers of war in a foreign country.

It was not long before they had another opportunity of ſhowing their zeal for the good of the public, and their determined purpoſe to maintain their own dignity and importance. Henry, notwithſtanding the difficulties in which he had been involved by following the advice of foreign miniſters, ſoon relapſed into the ſame error.

William de Savorie, biſhop elect of Valence, and uncle to the new queen, had been very active in forwarding the match between the king and Eleanor, whom he afterwards accompanied with a train of three hundred horſe into England. Theſe good offices, and his near relation to her majeſty, gave him ſuch an aſcendant at court, that Henry, deſpiſing the advice of his barons, reſigned himſelf entirely to the guidance of this new favourite, and managed all the affairs of ſtate by his ſole direction.

The Engliſh were always remarkable for their hatred of foreign favourites; the in-

juries they had ſuffered by the pernicious meaſures of Wincheſter and his Poitevins, were ſtill freſh in their memories; and they therefore reſolved to cruſh the influence of this minion, before he ſhould acquire ſuch a degree of authority as to affect the welfare of the nation.

Accordingly, in a parliament which was aſſembled at London on the twenty eight of April, they preſented a remonſtrance to the king upon this ſubject; and Henry was ſo terrified at the addreſs, that he retired to the tower, where he propoſed to finiſh the buſineſs of the ſeſſion; but the lords, not caring to truſt themſelves in a place commanded by the very perſons againſt whom their addreſs was levelled, he returned to his palace; and affairs were tranſacted in the uſual manner.

Before the diſmiſſion of this parliament, ambaſſadours arrived from Alexander king of Scotland, demanding the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland and Weſtmorland, and threatening to declare war in caſe of a refuſal. He ſeems to have choſen the preſent juncture for making this demand, as he probably thought that Henry would be unable to oppoſe him on account of ſome incurſions which the Welſh had lately made into the Engliſh territories. But theſe diſturbances were ſoon quelled.

Llewellyn,

Llewellyn, who was now old, infirm and paralytic, having agreed to a truce, which, at laſt, ended in a definitive treaty.

However, as Henry was unwilling to come to a rupture with Alexander, he amuſed him with a promiſe of examining his pretenſions; and, a conference being afterwards opened on the ſubject at York, under the mediation of Otho, the pope's legate, a final peace was concluded, by which Alexander renounced his claim in conſideration of two hundred pounds a year, payable by the northern counties, for which he ſwore fealty, and did homage to Henry.

The foreigners alarmed, but not intimidated, by the complaint which the barons had preferred againſt them, employed every art in order to ſtrengthen their party. They prevailed upon the king to remove Ralph Fitz-Nicholas, the lord ſteward, and other officers from their poſts in the houſhold and council: they likewiſe perſuaded him to demand the ſeals from the biſhop of Chicheſter; but this prelate, who had filled his high ſtation with all the ability of the moſt conſummate lawyer, and all the integrity of the moſt impartial judge, behaved with a ſpirit and reſolution, which muſt for ever endear his memory to every free-born Briton; he boldly replied, that as he had received his office from the parliament, he

would resign it by the order of that assembly, and by that alone.

This spirited answer, however, was not sufficient to open the eyes of the deluded monarch, nor to stop him short in his mad career. He recalled Rivaux, Seagrave, and Passelewe to court, where they recovered their former influence, and revived the pernicious measures for which they had been so generally detested, and so justly discarded; the custody of the castle of Glouceſter and Eleanor of Brittany was taken from William Talbot, and committed to their charge; in a word, they engrossed to themselves all the favours and benefactions which Henry had to bestow.

But these haughty foreigners, not content with having satisfied their avarice, must needs likewise gratify their revenge. They advised Henry to revoke all the alienations of the crown-demesnes, and all the grants of lands which he had made to the nobility before his marriage; and the more effectually to recommend the measure, they engaged the pope to interpose his authority.

Accordingly, in the month of June, Gregory issued a bull, representing those grants as injurious to the honour of the crown, and detrimental to the good of the public, absolving Henry from the oath by which they

they had been confirmed, and enjoining an immediate reſumption.

But happily, in this project, the foreign miniſters overſhot the mark. The ſcheme was rendered fruitleſs and abortive, by the very means they had employed in order to render it effectual. The pope's mandate was communicated to the parliament aſſembled at Weſtminſter; but the members rejected the propoſal with the utmoſt contempt and indignation; adding, that they could not comply with the bull, without acknowledging their ſubjection to the Roman ſee, of which they conſidered the nation as entirely independent.

Henry's ordinary revenue was, by no means, ſufficient to ſupply his own wants, and gratify the avarice of his favourites. He therefore began to think of ſome method of filling his coffers; and, as no other reſource occurred, he convoked another parliament, which met at Weſtminſter on the twentieth of January.*

This aſſembly was extremely numerous, as they expected that ſome matters of great conſequence would be brought upon the tapis. But Henry took care to undeceive them, by declaring, that his only reaſon for convening them at preſent, was to deſire an aid, which, if they thought proper, ſhould

* A. D. 1237.

be collected and applied to the public service, by such persons as they should appoint; and that, notwithstanding his former misconduct, he would, for the future, be entirely directed by the advice of his natural subjects.

The barons replied, that they had often granted him aids, which he had never employed for the glory or emolument of the kingdom; that, instead of extending his dominions, he had suffered them to be abridged; and oppressed his free-born subjects with every species of tyranny and despotism, by fleecing them of large sums of money, which he squandered away, with as little œconomy as discretion, among a set of flattering sycophants.

Henry pleaded the expences attending the marriage of his sister, his own nuptials, and the queen's coronation, as the occasion of his present poverty; and declared that, if they would grant a thirtieth of their moveables, he would never ask another supply that should give them any just cause of offence.

At the same time, in order to remove their fears of a resumption of former grants, he expressly disavowed the pope's bull, which, he said, had been obtained without his knowledge or consent; assured them, that he would inviolably observe the liberties

ties of Magna Charta; and ordered a ſentence of excommunication to be ſolemnly denounced againſt all perſons (himſelf not excepted) who ſhould dare to violate that ſacred conſtitution.

The parliament, influenced by theſe aſſurances, and by the admiſſion of the earl of Warenne, William Ferrers, and John Fitz-Geoffry into the privy-council, complied with his requeſt; and an aid of one thirtieth was accordingly levied upon all moveables, except money, plate, arms, horſes, inſtruments of huſbandry, and chattels belonging to prebends and pariſh churches; but the money ariſing from this tax was depoſited in certain abbeys, churches and caſtles, as a fund ſacred to the neceſſities of the government, and was granted on this expreſs condition, that Henry ſhould diſcard his foreign miniſters, and be governed, for the future, by the advice of his natural ſubjects. *

But,

* M. Paris informs us, that when the propoſal for this tax came to be conſidered in parliament, the barons quitted the aſſembly, and retired apart to conſult by themſelves; that the *magnates*, or greater barons, continued their deliberations in the preſence of the king; and that the prelates and clergy were the firſt who gave their aſſent; from whence it ſhould ſeem to follow, that they likewiſe conſulted by themſelves.

To

But, notwithſtanding the precautions taken by the barons, and the ſolemn proteſtations

To theſe obſervations on the method of granting taxes, it may not be improper to ſubjoin (from the ſame author) a few reflections concerning the conſtitution of this parliament, which was extremely full and numerous. The conſtituent members of it ſeem to have been, 1. The prelates or lords ſpiritual, and the clergy. 2. The *magnates*, or great barons, ſummoned by ſpecial writs: and 3. The ordinary barons, ſummoned in general by the ſheriff's proclamation.

Theſe laſt are what M. Paris means by the *nobiles*, under which appellation were comprehended all the gentry in general, as well thoſe who had no titles, as thoſe who had; all ſuch as had received the honour of knighthood, and were therefore ſtiled knights, and ſuch as held a knight's fee, though they had not received that honour, and were then diſtinguiſhed by the name of freeholders.

There are ſtill preſerved in the Tower of London ſome writs, iſſued during this reign, for the choice of two knights in each ſhire, to repreſent their county in parliament; but this method of repreſentation was not yet grown into a ſettled cuſtom, and though there are no ſummons either to lords or commons, nor any rolls of this parliament to be found in our ancient repoſitories, yet we may eaſily gather, from other quarters, that the leſſer barons, knights, and military tenants were ſummoned to appear, not by repreſentation, but in their own perſons.

M. Paris, in order to give us ſome idea of the immenſe numbers of gentry that aſſembled on this occaſion, uſes the following words: *infinita nobilium multitudo, ſcilicet totalis regni univerſitas.*

It is plain from this expreſſion, as well as from many other particulars, that the borroughs had as yet no repre-

tions made by the king, he had no ſooner got the money into his poſſeſſion, than he began to laviſh it away among his foreign favourites and his wife's relations. He importuned his father-in-law, the count of Provence, to come over to England, promiſing to ſupply him with a conſiderable ſum of money.

The count, allured by this bait, immediately ſet out on his journey, and, notwithſtanding the entreaties of his eldeſt daughter, who, with great duty and affection, deſired him to paſs ſome time at the court of France, proceeded directly to the ſea coaſt; but, before he could embark, he was recalled into his own country by a rebellion which had been raiſed in his abſence; and Henry, to convince him of the ſincerity of his promiſe, remitted him a thouſand pounds.

But the diſſipation of the public money was not the only fault of which this infatuated prince was guilty. He ſtill reſigned himſelf

repreſentatives; and this is further confirmed by the form of the writs which were iſſued for levying this ſubſidy: in one of theſe it is expreſly ſaid that the prelates, earls, and barons, aſſembled on the eve of St. Hilary, had granted the king a thirtieth of all their moveables; and the other declares that the prelates, earls, barons, and freeholders had granted a thirtieth for themſelves, and their villains: i. e. their copyholders and tenants.

himself to the guidance of his foreign counsellors, with as much blindness and partiality as ever. William de Valence was the person who possessed his chief confidence, and directed him in all his measures. Upon him he bestowed a great number of beneficial grants, and, among others, the honour of Richmond, which, but a few years before, had been given to his own brother the earl of Cornwall.

William's ambition was only exceeded by his avarice. Every honourable post, and every lucrative employment, was either engrossed by himself, or shared among his dependents. In a word, he behaved in such a haughty, arrogant, and despotic manner, that a rebellion would probably have ensued, had he not thought proper to avert the storm by withdrawing into his own country, where, however, he had no sooner deposited the large sums of money he had carried along with him, than he returned to England, and renewed his former practices.

Nevertheless, he was so conscious of the dangerous predicament in which he stood, that he prevailed on Henry to desire the pope would send over a legate, whose censures, supported by the royal authority, might overawe the barons, and restrain the mutinous spirit of the people.

No

No ſtep could be more diſagreeable to the nation in general, which, for a number of years paſt, had been cruelly oppreſſed and harraſſed by every perſon cloathed with a legatine character. It will not therefore be thought ſtrange, that Otho, who ſoon after arrived in England as the pope's legate, met with a very indifferent reception at his firſt landing; however, he conducted himſelf with ſo much prudence and moderation, that he ſoon gained the eſteem of the more ſenſible part of the nation.

His commiſſion extended to Scotland as well as England; but Alexander forbade him to paſs the borders; and indeed he had received ſuch a terrible account of the ferocity of the Scotch, that he had little inclination to viſit that country.

Nor did he think his perſon ſafe even in England at his firſt arrival, for which reaſon he was always attended by the earls of Pembroke, Lincoln, and Leiceſter, with a band of two hundred knights, on public occaſions.

On the twentieth of November, he aſſembled a general council of the prelates and inferior clergy, at St. Paul's in London, where ſeveral canons were enacted touching the diſcipline of the church, and prohibiting the practice of farming churches and eccleſiaſtical dignities, non-reſidence, and the marriage

marriage of the clergy; but the canon againſt pluralities was not eſtabliſhed, and the matter referred to the diſcretion of his holineſs.

Indeed he was particularly careful not to exerciſe any unpopular acts of authority, and employed his time to better purpoſe, in effecting a reconciliation between the biſhop of Wincheſter, Hubert de Burgh, Gilbert Baſſet, Stephen Seagrave, and Richard Siward, who had long been at variance, and in compromiſing ſome diſputes which had ariſen between the ſouthern and northern nobility, in a tournament lately held at Blithe.

The barons, however, were ſtill diſſatiſfied with the meaſures of the court; they were daily ſtripped of ſome of their poſſeſſions, and threatened with the loſs of many more; Henry declaring that he behoved to reſume the grants he had formerly made, inaſmuch as he could not alienate any of the royal demeſnes, without the conſent of the pope or his legate; a declaration which none but a weak and worthleſs prince could have made; as if, forſooth, he had not been an independant ſovereign, but a petty vaſſal of the Roman pontiff.

This reſolution he would not have dared to avow, had he not thought himſelf ſecure under the protection of Otho; and it was owing

owing to his confidence in this legate, that he diſregarded the remonſtrance of the Engliſh nobility, and even of his own brother the earl of Cornwall, who in vain endeavoured to perſuade him to a change of meaſures.

But though Henry thought himſelf invulnerable, while ſcreened by the authority of the cardinal, the barons enforced their complaints with ſo much vehemence and importunity, and diſcovered ſuch a determined reſolution to obtain a redreſs of their grievances, that the miniſtry found it neceſſary to gain over to their ſide ſome of the moſt conſiderable members of the oppoſition, particularly John earl of Lincoln, high conſtable of England, and Simon de Montfort earl of Leiceſter, youngeſt ſon of the famous general who commanded the cruſade againſt the Albigenſes. He inherited the honour of Hinckley, the ſtewardſhip of England, and the county of Leiceſter, by the reſignation of his brother Amaury, who poſſeſſed theſe dignities in right of his mother, one of the ſiſters and co-heireſſes of Robert Fitz-parnal, earl of Leiceſter.

Proud of the honour and antiquity of his family, elated with the dignity of his rank and character, and puffed up with the favour and influence he poſſeſſed with his maſter, his ambition ſurpaſſed all bounds; and

thinking himſelf too great for a ſubject, he aſpired to the condition of a ſovereign.

With this view, he had payed his addreſſes ſucceſſively to two heireſſes in foreign countries, the counteſſes of Boulogne and Flanders; but failing in both theſe attempts, he caſt his eyes upon Eleanor, the ſecond ſiſter of Henry, and widow of William de Mareſchal earl of Pembroke; a match that, if it ſucceeded, might one day raiſe him to the throne of England.

This lady, at the death of her firſt huſband, had made a vow of perpetual chaſtity, and taken the ring without the vail from Simon archbiſhop of Canterbury, in preſence of a great number of the nobility. But, notwithſtanding that obſtruction, the miniſtry, reſolving to engage Simon in their intereſt at any rate, perſuaded Henry to conſent to the marriage; and he actually gave her away, with his own hand, in the private chapel of his palace, where, on the ſeventh of January,* the ceremony was performed by one of his chaplains.

The archbiſhop of Canterbury gave Henry a ſevere reprimand for this unwarrantable ſtep, with which, however, he was not ſo much

* A. D. 1238.

much affected as with the reproof he received from his brother, the earl of Cornwall, on the ſame ſubject, and the meaſures taken by the nobility to defeat his ſchemes.

The barons were ſo enraged at the defection of Montfort and the earl of Lincoln, who was likewiſe bribed by a marriage between his daughter and Richard de Clare, that they reſolved to take up arms and do themſelves juſtice. Headed by the earls of Cornwall and Mareſchal, and reinforced by a number of the citizens of London, they repaired to court, and peremptorily inſiſted that Lincoln and Montfort ſhould be removed from the council-board. Henry, alarmed at this demand, and the determined air with which it was made, had recourſe to the mediation of the legate, who, by the promiſe of large grants of lands, of which he undertook to procure the pope's confirmation, appeaſed the reſentment of Cornwall; and a truce was concluded till the firſt Monday of Lent, when all grievances were to be redreſſed in a general council at London.

The barons appeared at the time and place appointed, and, leſt Henry ſhould retract his promiſe, they were accompanied with a numerous train of armed followers; but the earl of Cornwall being detached

from the association, the grievances of the nation were but half redressed, and the dispute was compromised by the interposition of the legate. The earls of Montfort and Lincoln were removed from the council; and Simon, afraid that his marriage would be dissolved, collected a large sum of money, and, leaving his wife big with child at the castle of Kenielworth, went privately to Rome, where, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the archbishop of Canterbury, he, by mere dint of bribery, obtained the pope's confirmation. Thus secured against the attacks of his enemies, he returned to England, where he was received with great cordiality and affection by Henry, who solemnly invested him with the earldom of Leicester.

This accommodation was no sooner finished, than the legate set out on a visitation towards the north of England. On his arrival at Oxford, he was received by the university with great respect, and had an elegant entertainment provided for him in the abbey of Osiney. After dinner, the scholars coming to pay their respects to his reverence, were rudely repulsed by his Italian porter, and, with the utmost indignity, refused admittance. A squabble immediately ensued: the scholars endeavoured to force an entrance; and the legate's servants opposed

poſed them with ſticks and other weapons. A poor Iriſh ſcolar, begging at the kitchingate, was miſerably ſcalded in the face by the ſteward of the houſhold, who was the legate's own brother, and who had been inveſted with this office to prevent all danger of poiſon; and a Welſhman obſerving this inſtance of barbarity, was ſo enraged that he ſhot him dead with an arrow.*

The legate, informed of this diſaſter, was ſtruck with ſuch a panic, that he fled to the church, from whence he eſcaped in the night to Abington, where he complained to the king of the cruel treatment he had received. As it was Henry's intereſt to ſupport the authority of the legate, and as he probably thought that ſuch an incident might reflect diſgrace upon the nation, he detached the earl of Warenne, with a party of ſoldiers, to relieve the legate's ſervants, who were ſtill inveſted in the abbey, and to ſeize the ſcholars who were employed in carrying on the ſiege; and thirty of them being taken, were committed priſoners to the caſtle of Wallingford.

* A lively picture of the rudeneſs and ſimplicity of the age, when cardinals brothers were cooks, and expreſſed their reſentment by ſcalding their enemies with boiling water.

Otho, not yet ſatisfied, laid the univerſity under an interdict, and excommunicated all thoſe who had been concerned in the late riot; but, at the interceſſion of the biſhops, who repreſented the affair as a mere accident, the provocation to which had been firſt given by his own ſervants, he was perſuaded to remove the cenſures, though the ſcholars were obliged, by way of penance, to walk barefoot from St. Paul's to the legate's lodgings.

Peter de Roches, biſhop of Wincheſter, dying on the ninth of June, Henry recommended William de Valence to ſucceed him in that ſee; but the monks excepted to him as a foreigner, odious to the nobility, and as a man, who, by his ignorance, paſſion, and debauchery, was altogether unqualified for ſuch a ſacred office.

However, in order to ſhew their inclination to oblige his majeſty, they made choice of William de Ralegh, and Ralf de Neville biſhop of Chicheſter, prelates equally remarkable for their learning and piety, and ſuppoſed to be acceptable to the court. Henry was ſo enraged at the preſumption of the monks, in pretending to diſpute his recommendation, that he removed Ralegh from his ſeat in the council, and ſtripped Neville of the ſeals; and perſuaded the pope to annul both elections, and appoint a new prior

prior in the convent, who at laſt procured a majority of his brethren in favour of William de Valence.

This warlike prelate had gone abroad with Henry de Turbeville, and an hundred other knights, to make a campaign in the army of the emperor; at preſent he commanded the pope's forces, and had lately, by his intrigues, been choſen biſhop of Liege, ſo that he was now poſſeſſed of three biſhoprics; but he did not long enjoy theſe promotions; for he died the next year at Viterbo on the firſt of November.

Towards the latter end of this year there happened a very ſtrange adventure which had well nigh deprived Henry of life. One Ribald, a perſon of family and learning, came to Wodeſtock, where the court was then kept, and either mad in reality, or affecting the appearance of madneſs, deſired Henry to reſign the crown, which he had uſurped from him to whom it of right belonged.

The officers in waiting would have forced him out of the preſence, and puniſhed him ſeverely for his inſolence; but Henry forbade them to offer any violence to the poor wretch, who ſeemed to be deprived of his ſenſes. This indulgence furniſhed him with an opportunity of continuing in the

the palace, and ſtealing at midnight into the king's bed-chamber, where he lay concealed under the bed with a deſign to murder his majeſty.

Happily for Henry, he that night chanced to ſleep in the queen's apartment; and the aſſaſſin, diſappointed of his prey, ran about the room roaring like a lunatic, and calling aloud for the king. One Margaret Biſſet, alarmed at his outcries, called in the guard, who immediately ſeized him, and took him into cuſtody.

Upon trial he confeſſed that he was ſuborned by William de Mareis to aſſaſſinate their majeſties; and that there were ſeveral other perſons engaged in the conſpiracy. He was condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; and the ſentence was accordingly executed at Oxford, tho' very little regard ſeems to have been given to his information. William de Mareis, indeed, was outlawed,* and a general proclamation was iſſued for ſeizing the conſpirators, but no body was apprehended, nor were any ſteps taken to diſcover the particulars of the plot. †

Henry

* A. D. 1239.

† Some hiſtorians have repreſented this accident as a concerted plan, and others, as the effect of lunacy. The circumſtance of Ribald's betraying himſelf before he had executed his deſign, and not endeavouring to make his eſcape when he found that impoſſible, ſeems to favour the latter opinion.

Henry was ſo unequal and inconſtant in all his conduct, that it was impoſſible to depend upon his favour for one day together. As he had no fixed principles of action, he was eaſily influenced by every whim or caprice, with which his favourites thought proper to inſpire him. He ſometimes careſſed thoſe whom he had lately diſgraced, and frequently inſulted others whom he had juſt been loading with favours and benefactions.

Of this ridiculous and unaccountable humour he gave ſome ſtriking inſtances about this very peiod. It has been already remarked, that upon the death of Richard earl of Pembroke, he beſtowed the office of earl mareſchal on that nobleman's brother Gilbert, who, by his whole conduct, had approved himſelf worthy of ſuch an exalted dignity. Gilbert thinking himſelf ſecure of the king's favour, repaired to court according to cuſtom, to pay his reſpects to his majeſty. But how great was his ſurpriſe, when, inſtead of his uſual reception, he was refuſed admittance, and even repulſed with indignity.

Provoked at this affront, he ſent one of his friends to demand the reaſon of ſuch ungenerous treatment. Henry replied, that his brother was a traitor, and had even perſiſted in his treaſon to his laſt moment;

moment; and that he was ſorry he had given him the office of great mareſchal, of which, however, he ſoon intended to deprive him; but Gilbert took care to prevent the execution of his deſign, by retiring to the north, where he reſolved to ſhelter himſelf from the intrigues of his enemies, who, he ſuppoſed, had inſpired the king with notions to his prejudice.

About the ſame time, the earl and counteſs of Leiceſter coming to court, he reviled the former in the moſt virulent and opprobrious terms, branding him with the appellation of a traitor and excommunicated wretch, who had debauched his wife before marriage, and afterwards, by bribery and corruption, obtained the pope's confirmation. This indignity offered to a nobleman of his rank, and in the preſence of his lady, who was the king's own ſiſter, alarmed them both to ſuch a degree, that they immediately took ſhipping and retired to the Continent.

Notwithſtanding the important ſervices, and inviolable fidelity of Hubert de Burgh, who had almoſt ſolely adhered to Henry, during the late rebellion, he could not eſcape another proſecution from the levity of the king, and the malevolence of the miniſters. A new ſuit was commenced againſt him for crimes of which he had been

been formerly acquitted; and though he demonſtrated his innocence by the moſt indiſputable evidence, he was, nevertheleſs, obliged to reſign four of his beſt caſtles, before he could appeaſe the reſentment of his majeſty.

Henry had almoſt forfeited the friendſhip of the pope, by ſending ſuccours to the emperor, who was then at war with that pontiff; and now, by a like capricious turn, he incurred the diſpleaſure of the emperor, by ordering the ſentence of excommunication, which had been iſſued againſt him, to be publiſhed in all the churches in England; a conduct the more unaccountable, as Frederic was his own brother-in-law, and that alliance might have furniſhed him with a pretext for declining, or, at leaſt, deferring the publication of the ſentence.

But Henry was never directed by any of thoſe maxims which influence the behaviour of others. Whatever whim or caprice happened to be uppermoſt in his head, he always followed the preſent impulſe without ſtudy or reflection. In a word, his conduct was become ſo intolerable, and his meaſures ſo arbitrary and oppreſſive, that a civil war would probably have enſued, had not the diſcontent and diſſatisfaction of the people been converted

ed into joy and acclamations by the birth of his ſon and heir, which happened on the twentieth day of June. In a few days after, the young prince was baptized by the legate, and named Edward, after the Confeſſor, whom Henry conſidered as his titular ſaint, and held in the higheſt veneration.

Notwithſtanding the equity and moderation with which Otho had demeaned himſelf on his firſt arrival in England, he was now become as greedy and rapacious as any of his predeceſſors. He had oppreſſed the churches and clergy with ſuch intolerable exactions, that the biſhops had preferred repeated complaints againſt him at the court of Rome; and the pope, who was always cautious not to loſe his authority by ſtretching it beyond its proper limits, had ſent letters of revocation to the legate at two different times; but theſe had always been countermanded at the interceſſion of Henry, to whom, in the odious and unpopuler meaſures he was now purſuing, the advice and aſſiſtance of Otho were become indiſpenſibly neceſſary.

At laſt, the biſhops, whoſe patience was entirely exhauſted by the inſolence of the legate, and their coffers drained by his unconſcionable exactions, aſſembled in a body, in order to contrive ſome means of delivering

livering themſelves from this intolerable grievance; but they had ſcarce begun to deliberate on the ſubject, when Otho entered the aſſembly, and demanded a freſh aid to relieve the neceſſities of the holy ſee.

The prelates incenſed at this new propoſition, told him with great ſpirit, that they were firmly reſolved to ſuffer his tyranny no longer, and broke up immediately, without allowing him time to repeat his requeſt, or advance any arguments to induce them to a compliance.

But Otho was not to be diſcouraged by ſuch a ſlight diſappointment. His avarice was not more inſatiable, than his ingenuity was fruitful in finding expedients to gratify his favourite paſſion. He forthwith had recourſe to the religious houſes, and obliged them to furniſh what the prelates had refuſed.

Though he had now exhauſted England of immenſe ſums of money, which he had either extorted from the clergy by his uſurped authority, or wheedled from them by low artifice and cunning, his greedy and rapacious mind was ſtill unſatisfied, and he therefore reſolved to purſue the ſame method in Scotland. He had received, indeed, a ſtrict prohibition from Alexander not to enter that country at his peril; but the love of money is frequently

a ſtronger paſſion than a regard to perſonal ſafety. Accordingly, he ſet out on his journey, attended by ſome Engliſh noblemen, whom he had found means to engage in his intereſt. When he came to the border, he was met by Alexander, who had been waiting his arrival for ſome days, not with a view of conducting him to his court, but in order to check his further progreſs.

Otho, provoked at this oppoſition, which, however, he had all the reaſon in the world to expect, threatened Alexander with the cenſure of the church; and the Scot replied, with great ſpirit and reſolution, that he neither regarded him nor his cenſures. In a word, the diſpute was carried on with ſuch warmth and animoſity, that an open rupture muſt ſoon have enſued, had not the Engliſh noblemen interpoſed their good offices, and compromiſed the quarrel. Alexander was perſuaded, though not without great difficulty, to allow the legate to enter his dominions for this time only; but even this favour he did not grant, until Otho had acknowledged, under his hand and ſeal, that he conſidered this permiſſion as a compliment paid to his own perſon, and that it ſhould never be alledged as a precedent on future occaſions.

Thus

Thus reconciled, the king and the legate ſet out for Edinburgh, where, notwithſtanding all the precaution that could be uſed to prevent the exerciſe of his legatine authority, the latter found means to procure ſome contributions from the Scottiſh clergy.

But the extortion of the legate was not the only grievance under which the people of England laboured. While Otho plundered the clergy, the king pillaged the laity. As he found it difficult to obtain ſufficient ſupplies from parliament, he embraced every opportunity of ſqueezing money from individuals; and purſued his arbitrary and deſpotic meaſures with the greateſt cruelty and barbarity.

Nothing, ſurely, could have induced the Engliſh to ſuffer ſuch oppreſſion from ſo weak and worthleſs a prince as Henry, but the terror of papal reſentment, and the fear of reinvolving the nation in thoſe miſeries and calamities from which it had been ſo lately relieved.

But, though they were averſe from violent meaſures, they reſolved to take ſuch ſteps for procuring a redreſs of their grievances, as were conſiſtent with the preſervation of public peace and tranquillity. The prelates convoked another ſynod at London, and preſented a remonſtrance to

the king, in which they complained that he converted all the profits of vacant benefices to his own use, and obstructed the elections, until the persons recommended by him were chosen by the chapters; and they even proceeded so far as to excommunicate the authors and advisers of such pernicious measures.

But Henry had very little regard to their complaints, as he thought himself perfectly secure under the protection of his holiness, for whom he soon after manifested his deference in a manner that reflects eternal disgrace upon his memory. When the emperor sent ambassadors to demand the reason of his having published the sentence of excommunication, he replied, that he was a vassal to the pope, and durst not disobey his orders: a confession more worthy of an abject slave, than of an independant sovereign.

In the mean time, the legate had returned from Scotland, and began to renew his intolerable exactions.* After having drained the churches and monasteries of immense sums, under the title of procurations, and other frivolous pretences, he discovered a new species of extortion, which was not a stronger proof of the avarice of the

* A. D. 1240.

the pope, than of his dexterity and addreſs in finding out expedients to fill his coffers.

He publiſhed a mandate in the name of his holineſs, by which he was empowered not only to abſolve from their vow all ſuch as had taken the croſs with a view of going to Paleſtine, but to compel them to redeem themſelves with money, on pain of excommunication.

He likewiſe granted to the abbots and monks of Cluny a tenth of the profits of all the treaſures in England for the ſpace of three years. But even Henry, abject and meanſpirited as he was, reſented this impoſition, and forbade the agents to collect it on pain of incurring the ſevereſt penalties.

Not diſcouraged by this repulſe, the pope endeavoured to raiſe a fifth of all eccleſiaſtical revenues in England, as an aid for ſecuring the church againſt the pretended aſſaults of the emperor. This exaction was firſt demanded from the Roman clergy, ſettled in England, who accordingly paid it, not daring to refuſe any thing to a power on which they entirely depended: it was afterwards propoſed to the prelates in a council at Reading; but they continued to elude the demand, until Edmund, archbiſhop of Canterbury, foreſeeing the dangerous conſequences of a refuſal, agreed to pay it, and the reſt followed his example.

The pope seems to have oppressed the English, even with a wantonness of cruelty. He had hardly received the immense sums which were raised by the late exaction, when he sent orders to Edmund, and the bishops of London and Sarum, to reserve three hundred of the best livings in England for the use of the Roman clergy, on pain of being suspended from the power of collating. These benefices, it seems, he intended to bestow upon the children and relations of the citizens of Rome, who, on these conditions, had engaged to assist him against the emperor.

Edmund was greatly incensed at this insolent demand; and finding it impossible to obtain any redress from the king, to whom he complained of the imposition, he began to grow weary of life, and retired to Choisy in Burgundy, where he died on the sixteenth of November, and was buried in the abbey of Pontigny.

Hitherto the pope had levied his exactions by mere dint of authority, but, finding that his influence was greatly weakened, he was obliged to have recourse to low artifice and cunning. He employed his nuncio, one Peter Rubens, to collect money from one religious house to another, pretending that certain bishops and abbots, of whom

whom he produced a forged liſt, had already contributed their ſhares, and others were drawn in by their example.

This money, he alledged, was deſigned for a particular purpoſe, which would be made known in ſix months, and in the mean time he compelled them to ſwear ſecreſy, on pain of excommunication. But the abbots of St. Edmundſbury and Battel having diſcovered the trick, complained of it to the king, who was ſo far from acting up to his royal character, by condemning ſuch mean and diſhonourable proceeding, and affording redreſs to the complainants, that he ſeverely reprimanded them for their preſumption, and threatened to commit them to priſon. In conſequence, however, of this diſcovery, the nuncio was obliged to relinquiſh his project, and procure the ſums he wanted, by more fair and equitable means.

With this view he applied to the biſhops, whom he convoked in two ſucceſſive ſynods, and endeavoured to perſuade into a compliance with his propoſal. But all his endeavours proved unſucceſsful, until he began to tamper with them ſingly, and corrupt their integrity by promiſes of penſions and preferments, and threats of ſuſpenſion or deprivation in caſe of refuſal.

Hav-

Having thus ſecured a majority in his intereſt, he aſſembled a ſynod at London, and again renewed his demand, which, being ſtrongly ſupported by the king, the prelates were, at laſt, obliged to comply; and the contribution was levied in England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland; notwithſtanding the truce concluded between the pope and the emperor, till the enſuing Eaſter, when a great council was to be held at Rome, in which the articles of peace were to be finally adjuſted. A like contribution had been collected in France; but Lewis hearing of the ſuſpenſion of arms, and the negociations for a peace, ordered the money to be kept in the kingdom, that the pope might be forced to obſerve a convention, which ſuch a ſupply would have enabled him to break.

Otho being ſummoned to aſſiſt at the conferences, departed from England about Chriſtmas, and is ſaid to have carried more money with him than was left in the kingdom; though the pope reaped no advantage, either from that or the firſt contribution, the two legates being intercepted at ſea by the Piſans who were in alliance with the emperor, and who ſeized their treaſure and impriſoned their perſons.

Otho had conceived ſuch a favourable idea of the wealth and folly of the Engliſh nation, that he was extremely ſorry to leave a ſoil

a ſoil which produced ſuch rich and plentiful harveſts.* However, as there was an abſolute neceſſity for his repairing to Rome, he took care to leave a ſucceſſor to glean the remains of the contribution, which had not yet been fully levied.

This was Peter Rubens, the nuncio, who executed his commiſſion with great punctuality, and even endeavoured to obtain the gift of two prebends and corrodies from the cathedrals and convents, which the pope had formerly demanded in vain. He made his firſt attempt upon the abbey of Peterborough, the example of which, he imagined, would be followed by the other churches. He tried to prevail upon the monks, partly by threats and partly by promiſes; but they eluded his requeſt, and alledged, in excuſe, that they could not take ſuch a ſtep without the conſent of the crown, which had been the founder, and was ſtill the patron of the convent, and without the concurrence of their abbot, Walter de St. Edmund, who was now attending the Roman council.

This prelate was no ſooner apprized of the dangerous deſigns of the nuncio, than he tranſmitted to Henry ſuch a terrible picture of the fatal conſequences of granting his requeſt, that he ſtrictly inhibited

* A. D. 1241.

ed the convent from making any conceſſions.

Though the pope's agents were defeated in this attempt, they ſucceeded in levying a twentieth on the clergy of Ireland, which amounted, beſides free gifts and compoſitions, to fifteen hundred marks. With this ſum, and what they had collected in England before Henry put a ſtop to the contribution, they poſted to Dover, and left the kingdom with great ſecreſy and expedition, fearing, as indeed they had good reaſon to fear, that, ſhould the pope die before their departure, they might be ſtripped of their ill-got treaſure.

Gregory had lately built a ſtrong caſtle in the Campagna, for the ſecurity and protection of his nephews; but this place being taken and demoliſhed by the emperour, he was ſo deeply affected with the loſs, that he was ſeized with a diſtemper, which carried him off about the twenty ſecond of Auguſt. The agents, indeed, had croſſed the ſea before the news of his death reached England, but they were not able to convey their treaſure to Rome, being taken on the road and plundered by the emperor, who probably thought he had as good a right to rob them, as they had to rob the Engliſh.

Henry's

Henry's ſorrow for the departure of the legate, was ſoon allayed by the arrival of Peter de Savoy, one of the queen's uncles, who, about this very period, came to England, where he was received by the king with great honour, and ſolemnly knighted in the abbey of Weſtminſter; a tournament being appointed at the ſame time, to be held at Northampton, for his pleaſure and entertainment.

Henry was always ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed in favour of foreigners, and he gave a ſtriking proof this partiality on the preſent occaſion. He perſuaded John Biſſet, Gilbert Baſſet, and ſeveral others of the Engliſh nobility, to eſpouſe the cauſe of theſe foreigners againſt Roger Bigod earl of Norfolk, who had engaged to enter the liſts with Peter de Savoy.

The Engliſh were ſo enraged at this baſe and ungenerous proceeding, that the ludicrous combat had well nigh been converted into a bloody battle, the parties being actually drawn up, and ready to begin the engagement, when the king, apprized of the danger, and convinced of his own folly and indiſcretion, ſent poſitive orders to forbid the tournament.

But all his authority was not ſufficient to prevent another match of this nature, which was afterwards held at Ware near Hertford,

Hertford, where Gilbert, earl Mareſchal, loſt his life by an unruly horſe, Robert de Say was ſlain, and a number of people were dangerouſly wounded. The king was ſo enraged at this contempt of his orders, that he at firſt refuſed to beſtow the inveſtiture of the late Mareſchal's lands on his brother Walter, who had likewiſe been engaged in the tournament; but, being appeaſed by the interceſſion of the biſhop of Durham, he not only inveſted him in his brother's poſſeſſions, but even preſented him with the Mareſchal's ſtaff, and allowed him to do homage to the king of France, for ſome lands which he held in Normandy.

It is hard to ſay, whether Henry took greater pleaſure in fleecing his Engliſh ſubjects, or in conferring favours upon his foreign relations. He granted the honour of Richmond, and many other eſtates, to Peter de Savoy, together with the cuſtody of all the lands belonging to John earl of Warenne, in Suſſex and Surrey; and he advanced his brother, Boniface, to the archbiſhopric of Canterbury.

The late archbiſhop being oppoſed by the monks of Chriſt-church in the choice of a prior, had, a little before his death, laid them under the ſentence of excommunication; and they refuſed to proceed to a new election, until they ſhould be abſolved

ſolved by his holineſs. The pope, accordingly, had empowered the archdeacon of St. Alban's, and the prior of Dunſtaple, to give them abſolution. But Simon de Langton, archdeacon of Canterbury, appealing againſt that commiſſion, as obtained on falſe and frivolous pretences, the monks applied to Henry for protection, aſſuring him, at the ſame time, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that, if he would eſpouſe their cauſe, and effectually befriend them, they would elect Boniface to the vacant ſee.

The king embraced the propoſal; and ſoon prevailed on Langton to withdraw his appeal, in conſequence of which Boniface was choſen without oppoſition, though he could not be confirmed till two years after, on account of the vacancy in the Roman ſee.

Henry did not derive more pleaſure from the ſucceſs of this ſcheme, than he did from another event of a very different nature, which happened about this period. This was the death of Eleanor of Brittany, the hereditary heireſs of the Engliſh crown, in right of her father Geoffry, the elder brother of the late king. She had paſſed her days in continual confinement, and now died a virgin in the caſtle of Briſtol. Her body was at firſt buried in the priory of St. James in that city; but was after-

wards taken up, and delivered to the prioreſs of Ambreſbury, in order to be interred in the church of that nunnery, according to her dying requeſt.

The title of this princeſs had been a conſtant ſource of fear and apprehenſion to king John and his ſon Henry. It was probably owing to this cauſe, that the latter was ſo very ſuſpicious of the loyalty of his Engliſh ſubjects, and repoſed ſo much truſt and confidence in foreign favourites, who, having no principle to direct their conduct, but a regard to their own intereſt, were the more likely to be devoted to his ſervice: and it was certainly owing to this cauſe that, in the courſe of the preceding year, he obliged all perſons in England, above the age of twelve years, to take an eventual oath of allegiance to his infant ſon Edward.

This prince owed his name to the profound veneration which Henry had for the Confeſſor, in honour of whoſe memory he rebuilt the church of Weſtminſter, at a very great expence; amounting, according to the beſt computation, to no leſs than thirty ſix thouſand pounds; he kept all his feſtivals with the utmoſt pomp and ſolemnity; and cauſed a golden ſhrine, of exquiſite workmanſhip, to be made for his relicks.

By

By this time, Henry's prodigality and profuſion had entirely exhauſted his finances, which he therefore wanted to recruit. For this purpoſe, ſeveral talliages were laid on the nation, and levied with great ſeverity. The citizens of London compounded for a thouſand marks of ſilver, and twenty marks of gold; and the Jews, who were always fleeced without mercy, were obliged to pay upwards of twenty thouſand.

Mean while Henry's attention was engroſſed by ſome diſturbances which had lately ariſen in Wales. Llewellyn, prince of that country, dying in an advanced age, left his principality to his ſon David, who had committed ſome depredations upon the Engliſh borders. He had a natural brother elder than himſelf, whoſe name was Griffin, and who was extremely beloved by the Welch for his humanity and valour. Griffin laid claim to part of his father's inheritance, to which he had a right by the laws of the land; but David, inſtead of granting his requeſt, committed him to cloſe priſon.

Though Henry might have juſtly conſidered Wales as a fief of the Engliſh crown, ever ſince the homage he had received from Llewellyn, he would not perhaps have interfered in this diſpute, had he not been

induced by the importunity of Senana, wife to Griffin.

This princeſs repaired to the Engliſh court, and earneſtly intreated the king to eſpouſe the cauſe of her huſband, promiſing that if he would procure his liberty, and aſſiſt him in aſſerting his right, he would make him a preſent of ſix hundred marks, and pay him an annual tribute of half that ſum.

Henry, tempted by this offer, interpoſed his good offices with David; but theſe proving ineffectual, he entered Wales with a ſtrong army, and ſoon compelled him to releaſe his brother, and ſubmit to ſuch conditions as he thought proper to impoſe. Theſe imported that he ſhould ſtand to the judgment of the king's court with regard to the portion of his father's lands, which, by the cuſtom of Wales, ſhould be determined to belong to Griffin; that he ſhould reſtore all the forts and caſtles he had taken in the marches, and convey the lordſhips of Elleſmere and Engleſield to the crown of England; that he ſhould indemnify the king for the expences of the expedition, and make reparation for all the injuries he had committed; that he ſhould afford no ſhelter or protection to any Engliſhman, who had been outlawed, or condemned to baniſhment; and that he ſhould approve himſelf

himſelf a faithful vaſſal and liegeman to Henry, and his heirs for ever.

But David was no ſtranger to Henry's foible. He knew that avarice was his ruling paſſion; he was ſenſible that he had eſpouſed the cauſe of Griffin with ſo much eagerneſs, from no other motive than a regard to his own intereſt, and that he would deſert it with the ſame alacrity, could he find his account in ſuch a meaſure. He therefore reſolved to avail himſelf of this diſpoſition of the Engliſh monarch: he offered him a larger ſum than Senana had promiſed; and Henry, to the eternal diſgrace and infamy of his character, accepted the baſe and diſhonourable bribe. Inſtead of the protector he now became the perſecutor of Griffin, and committed him cloſe priſoner to the Tower. The unhappy prince remained in confinement above two years: at laſt, endeavouring to make his eſcape, the rope gave, and falling down headlong, he daſhed out his brains, and inſtantly expired.

While Henry was diſgracing his character by ſuch an inſtance of perfidy and baſeneſs, his brother Richard was gathering laurels in the plains of Paleſtine, where he had acquired great reputation by his courage, conduct, and liberality, having fortified Aſcalon, recovered Jeruſalem, and concluded an ad-

vantageous truce for ten years with the Saracens.

Thus loaded with glory and renown, he ſet out on his return to his native country, and in every place, through which he paſſed, was received with marks of honour and diſtinction. He was particularly careſſed at the imperial court, where he tarried two months with his ſiſter the empreſs, who died in child-bed immediately after his departure.

Hardly was he arrived in England, when he received an invitation from the Poitevins to come over to Poitou, and aſſert his right to that province. Before he departed for Paleſtine, he had received the inveſtiture of that county from his brother, tho' France had been in poſſeſſion of a conſiderable part of it, ever ſince the time of Philip Auguſtus; and the province being thus divided between the two crowns, Lewis imagined he had as good a right to beſtow the livery of it upon his brother Alphonſo.

Henry, provoked at this encroachment, reſolved to revenge the inſult, and engaged in the quarrel the more eagerly, as it affected the intereſt of his mother Iſabel, who, ſoon after the death of king John, had married her firſt lover the count de la Marche. As her huſband's eſtate lay in that part of Poitou, which was ſubject to France,

France, he had hitherto done homage to Lewis; but now that Alphonſo was become lord paramount of the province, ſhe diſſuaded him from acknowledging his ſuperiority; for proud of the title of queen of England, ſhe ſcorned to ſtoop to Jane of Thouloufe.

The count, influenced by her advice, and exaſperated by ſome affronts he had received from the French court, refuſed to take the oath of allegiance to Alphonſo; and as he knew that a war muſt be the neceſſary conſequence of ſuch a refuſal, he reſolved to prepare himſelf againſt the impending ſtorm.

With this view, he engaged the king of Arragon, the counts of Thouloufe and Provence, the viſcount of Narbonne, and ſeveral other noblemen in his intereſt, and diſpatched ambaſſadors to England, to demand aſſiſtance from Henry. He aſſured him, that the French might eaſily be expelled from Poitou, and that the province itſelf would furniſh a number of men ſufficient for that purpoſe, provided he would defray the expence of their ſubſiſtence.

Henry, charmed with this project, aſſembled a parliament, and demanded an aid proportionable to the greatneſs of the expedition.*

But,

* A. D. 1242.

But, far from granting his requeſt, they upbraided him with the exorbitant ſums he had formerly extorted from the people, and the profuſe and prodigal manner in which he had ſquandered them away; they taxed him with breach of promiſe in relation to the two charters of liberties, which he had often ſworn to obſerve, and as often attempted to infringe; in fine, they aſſured him that, as the truce with France was ſtill ſubſiſting, they would, by no means, aſſiſt him in violating the laws of equity and honour.

Theſe complaints affected Henry the more ſenſibly, as he was conſcious they were but too well founded. But though they gave him ſome uneaſineſs, they were not ſufficient to make him relinquiſh his deſign: he ſtill reſolved to carry his point; and as he found it impoſſible to prevail upon the parliament in a body, he endeavoured to cajole the members in private; a method which had ſucceeded on ſome occaſions. By theſe means he engaged a majority in his intereſt, and, at laſt, obtained a thirtieth of all the moveables in the realm, for the ſervice of this undertaking: at the ſame time, he impoſed a talliage on the cities, boroughs, and crown demeſnes in Ireland, and received an aid from the clergy of that kingdom.

Having

Having thus repleniſhed his coffers, he ſummoned all his military tenants to attend him with horſes and arms at Wincheſter, on the twenty-ſeventh of April, in order to embark for Guienne; and in the mean time, the better to ſecure the tranquillity of the kingdom in his abſence, agreed to a match between his daughter Margaret and Alexander, ſon to the king of Scotland, who engaged to preſerve the peace in the northern counties.

William, archbiſhop of York, was appointed guardian of the realm, with power to diſpoſe of wards, and grant congè d'elires to monaſteries under fifty pounds a year, but to undertake no matter of importance without the advice and concurrence of William biſhop of Norwich, and William de Canteloup. Ralf biſhop of Chicheſter, Godfrey de Craucombe, Ralf Fitz-Nicholas, and ſeveral other barons, who had been long in diſgrace, were now recalled to court, and received into favour; and the nation, in general, ſeemed to be reconciled to the meaſures of the government.

The public tranquillity being thus ſecured, Henry embarked at Portſmouth with his queen, his brother Richard, ſeven earls, three hundred knights, and thirty hogſheads of ſilver, and, after a quick and ſafe paſſage,

age, landed at Royane, a port of Santogne, at the mouth of the river Gironde.

Lewis, apprized of Henry's hostile intentions, had taken care to make preparations for defeating the success of the expedition. He had equipped a fleet of eighty gallies at Rochelle, and assembled an army of four thousand knights, twenty thousand gentlemen and bowmen, besides an incredible number of infantry.

With these forces he fell into Poitou, where he took Montreuil en Gastigne, Moncontour, Beruge, Vouvant, and other places belonging to the count de la Marche, and at length invested Fontenay, one of the strongest fortresses in the province. The place was commanded by the count's own natural son, who, after a bold and obstinate defence, in which he sustained some desperate assaults, was, at last, obliged to surrender at discretion. Lewis was pressed, by his nobility, to hang the garrison *in terrorem*; but he rejected the cruel proposal with a noble contempt and indignation, observing, "that a vassal did not deserve to be "hanged for serving his lord, nor a son for "obeying his father."

He was engaged in the siege of this fortress, when Henry landed at Royane, and sent ambassadors to him to demand satisfaction for his infraction of the truce. Lewis replied,

replied, that he could not conceive in what particular inſtance he had been guilty of ſuch a breach of honour; that, far from having violated, he had obſerved the truce with the utmoſt punctuality; that he was deſirous to maintain, and even to prolong the ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities; that the counts of la Marche and Thouloufe, were not comprehended in the treaty; that he was not precluded by any article in that agreement, from preſerving the peace of his kingdom; that Henry himſelf had broken the truce, by coming with an armed force to aſſiſt the vaſſals of France in their rebellion; and that he had no buſineſs to interfere in any diſputes between him and his ſubjects.

Henry affected to conſider this anſwer as a flat refuſal, and accordingly declared war againſt Lewis with the uſual forms. After having paſſed a few days at Royane, he advanced to Pons, where he was joined by the nobility of Gaſcony, with their vaſſals.

Thus reinforced, he proceeded to Saintes; but finding himſelf ſtill too weak to oppoſe the enemy, he wrote to England for a ſupply of two hundred knights, and half that number of horſemen. Soon after he marched to Toney on the Charente, in order to check the progreſs of Lewis, who had now

reduced

reduced the greateſt part of the count of la Marche's caſtles.

During his abode at this place, he conferred the honour of knighthood on the count's two ſons, to the elder of whom he aſſigned an annuity of ſix hundred marks, and to the younger a penſion of five hundred, to be paid regularly out of his exchequer, until he ſhould be able to provide them with lands of an equal value.

At the ſame time he concluded a treaty with Geoffry de Rancone, lord of Taillebourg, and took poſt in the neighbourhood of that place, by which means he had it in his power either to ſeize the town and caſtle, or to break down the bridge, ſo as to hinder the French king from paſſing the river. But he was diſſuaded from taking either of theſe precautions, by the advice of the count de la Marche and Renaud de Pons, who directed his meaſures in every thing, and who aſſured him that he might ſafely depend upon Geoffry's honour and fidelity. Accordingly he retired to Saintes; but receiving intelligence that Lewis was drawing towards the Charente, he advanced to Taillebourg, in order to oppoſe his paſſage. Unhappily, however, he came too late to effect his purpoſe. Lewis had already croſſed the river, and taken poſ-

ſeſſion

ſeſſion of the city, where he was joined by Geoffry.

As the French were greatly ſuperior to the Engliſh in point of numbers, Henry did not think it adviſeable to hazard an action, and therefore reſolved to retreat to Saintes. But this reſolution was not executed without moleſtation. Lewis no ſooner perceived the Engliſh in motion, than he attacked their rear with ſuch fury and impetuoſity, that, after a bold and vigorous reſiſtance, he at laſt put them to flight, with the loſs of a great number of men.

Encouraged by this ſucceſs, he continued to purſue them to the gates of Saintes, where, contrary to his expectation, he met with a ſevere check. The count de la Marche having made a ſally to favour the retreat, the earls of Cornwall, Norfolk, Sarum, and Leiceſter, rallied their troops, and renewed the engagement. The diſpute was maintained with equal bravery and reſolution on both ſide, and at laſt, after a terrible carnage, it proved a drawn battle. The Engliſh army, however, had ſuffered ſo much in theſe two actions, that Henry abandoned Saintes immediately, and proceeded to Pons, where leaving a ſtrong garriſon, he continued his march to Xarbeſceux, a place of greater ſafety.

The count de la Marche was greatly alarmed at the rapid progress of Lewis's arms. He plainly perceived that the English king was altogether unable to protect him against the whole power of France; he was sensible that the longer he held out, he should be obliged to submit to the more severe and disadvantageous terms; and he therefore resolved, before it should be too late, to provide for his own safety. Accordingly, he dispatched his eldest son to sue for some tolerable conditions; and the young nobleman met with such a favourable reception, that the count was reduced to repair to the French camp with his wife and children, and throw himself upon the conqueror's mercy.

Lewis, who was a prince of great generosity, readily indulged him with a pardon, and only demanded three of his castles as pledges of his future fidelity. But though he was thus reconciled to the count de la Marche, he resolved to take vengeance on the king of England, for assisting his subjects in their rebellious measures. With this view he had advanced to the neighbourhood of Blaye, where the English were encamped, when the plague breaking out in his army,* and himself being seized

* This plague is said to have carried off no less than twenty thousand of the French army.

ſeized with a dangerous diſorder, he was obliged to give up all thoughts of proſecuting his conqueſts, and returned to his own dominions.

To this ſtep too he is ſuppoſed to have been induced by ſome ſcruples of conſcience, with regard to the oath which his father had taken, to reſtore the territories on the Continent, that had formerly been poſſeſſed by the kings of England. Whatever be in this, certain it is he agreed to a truce for five years, after having reduced the whole county of Poitou to his obedience.

Though Henry had no more buſineſs of any importance to detain him on the Continent, he was ſo imprudent as to trifle away the whole winter in Gaſcogny, where, what with feaſting, riot and largeſſes to the nobility, he entirely exhauſted his finances.*

Thus reduced to extreme poverty, he was obliged to write for a ſupply to the archbiſhop of York, whom, at the ſame time, he enjoined to confiſcate the eſtates of certain noblemen who had abandoned the ſervice and returned to England without permiſſion. The firſt part of his orders was punctually executed, and the money immediately

* A. D. 1243.

diately remitted; but the regent declined complying with the laſt, for fear of exciting a diſturbance in the kingdom during his majeſty's abſence.

Hardly had Henry received this ſupply, when he ſent orders to the regent to demand the profits of a year's wool from the Ciſtercians; but this the abbots refuſed to grant with ſuch a reſolute and determined air, as plainly ſhewed, that nothing but force would make them ſubmit to ſuch an impoſition. This was an expedient which the regent was extremely unwilling to employ: he therefore applied to the parliament, which granted him a ſcutage of twenty ſhillings upon every knight's fee, a ſum ſufficient to diſcharge all the debts which the king had contracted, had it been managed with œconomy and diſcretion. But this was ſquandered away with his uſual prodigality and profuſion, and the archbiſhop deſired to furniſh him with freſh ſupplies. The regent deſpairing of obtaining any more aids from parliament, or extorting grants from the religious orders, attempted to borrow money, in the king's name, from wealthy individuals; a practice unpopular at all times, even when the money was to be applied to the moſt neceſſary purpoſes of government, but particularly odious when it was to be laviſhed away in gratifying

tifying the vanity of a weak and worthleſs monarch, and ſatiating the avarice of needy and rapacious minions; and accordingly it did not ſucceed. The archbiſhop baffled in this attempt, ſent word to the king that all reſources were utterly ſtopped, and that there was an abſolute neceſſity for his immediate return.

Henry, reduced to extreme want, and deprived of all hopes of any further remittances, began to prepare for his departure, and accordingly ſent orders to all the nobility in England, to aſſemble at Portſmouth for his reception. Before he left Bourdeaux, he ratified the truce with France; a truce that redounds to his eternal diſgrace and infamy; as, beſides the territories he had loſt, he engaged to pay Lewis the ſum of five thouſand pounds a year. He then embarked for England; and, as the Roman Emperour after gathering cockle-ſhells on the ſea-ſhore, demanded and obtained the honour of a triumph, Henry entered London with as much pomp and magnificence, as if he had returned from a conqueſt.

Before he engaged in this expedition, he had ſent the biſhop of Hereford to the court of his father-in-law, the count de Provence, to negociate a marriage between his brother Richard, and Sanchia, the count's third daughter; and, though the match was ex-

tremely disagreeable to the English, who plainly perceived it must strengthen the interest of the Provensals in England, the contract was adjusted; and the young lady, arriving on the fourteenth of November, under the care of her mother Beatrix, the nuptials were solemnized with great pomp and magnificence, at Westminster, on the twenty second of the same month.

Immediately after the celebration of the marriage, the king confirmed to Richard, the earldom of Cornwall, and the honours of Eye and Wallingford; he likewise engaged to convey to him and his heirs by Sanchia, lands to the amount of five hundred pounds a year; and, till such time as he could put him in possession of this grant, he allowed him an annuity of a thousand marks, payable out of the exchequer at two different terms. The countess of Provence, having thus seen her daughter happily settled, set out on her return to her own country, after having borrowed of the king the sum of four thousand marks for the use of her husband. *

Henry's next care was recruit his finances, which, by the charge attending his late expedition, the expences of his brother's wedding, the sum he had lent to his father-in-law,

* A. D. 1244.

law, and by his own prodigality and profuſion, were now entirely exhauſted.

With this view he iſſued writs to the ſheriffs, directing them to enquire into all breaches and tranſgreſſions of the law by widows and others, who had married without a licenſe, and into all treſpaſſes and encroachments upon the royal foreſts; and, by this means, conſiderable ſums were raiſed.

At the ſame time he prohibited the exportation of wool, as well to gratify his reſentment againſt the Ciſtercians and Premonſtrants, who had refuſed him one year's profit of that commodity, as to induce them, by ſuch a meaſure, to comply with his demand; and this they were abſolutely obliged to do, before the prohibition could be taken off.

But, in all caſes of neceſſity, the Jews were a never failing ſupport: from them he now extorted ſuch immenſe ſums, that one Aaron of York, was forced to pay, for his own ſhare, no leſs than four marks of gold, and as many thouſands of ſilver.

He likewiſe found another reſource, in the confiſcation of ſuch Engliſh eſtates as belonged to the Norman nobility; a practice in which he was juſtified by the example of the king of France, who had appropriated to himſelf all the lands

lands in Normandy which belonged to the Engliſh barons; both monarchs, probably, thinking, that no man could ſerve two maſters with the ſame fidelity and attachment; two maſters eſpecially whoſe intereſts were ſo irreconcilable as thoſe of Henry and Lewis.

But, whatever ſums he might have raiſed by theſe methods, they were by no means ſufficient to ſupply his wants, or ſatisfy his avarice: he was once more obliged to ſolicit a ſupply from parliament; and an invaſion which the king of Navarre had lately made into Gaſcony, and ſome depredations committed by the Welch upon the Engliſh borders, furniſhed him with a plauſible pretext for this purpoſe. Accordingly, in a great council which was convoked at Weſtminſter, he himſelf made the motion for a ſubſidy; but it was received with all the marks of a general diſapprobation.

The prelates and laity retiring ſeparately to deliberate on the propoſal, came, at laſt, to a reſolution, that no ſupply ſhould be granted but by their common conſent; and that a committee of twelve perſons ſhould be choſen to draw up the demands they intended to make to his majeſty, and to concert proper meaſures for preventing all encroachments on the charters.

In

In this remonſtrance they complained that writs had been iſſued out of the chancery prejudicial to the liberties of the nation; they deſired that they might have the nomination of the chancellor and juſticiary; that four noblemen of the king's council, ſhould be appointed conſervators of the liberties of the kingdom, and be inveſted with a power to inſpect the treaſury, and the application of the public money; to ſummon a parliament as often as they ſhould think neceſſary; and to act as arbiters in all diſputes between the king and his ſubjects. They inſiſted, that all writs, contrary to the cuſtom of the realm, ſhould be revoked; that ſevere cenſures ſhould be publiſhed againſt all ſuch as oppoſed theſe regulations; and that a number of noblemen ſhould be appointed for preſerving them in full force and vigour; that the chancellor and juſticiary, choſen by conſent of parliament, ſhould always be two of the four conſervators; that if the king ſhould deprive the chancellor of the ſeals, all writs ſigned by his ſucceſſor ſhould be null and of no effect; that, beſides the chancellor and juſticiary, two judges in the common-pleas, two barons in the exchequer, and a juſtice of the Jews ſhould be nominated by parliament; and that all ſuſpected perſons ſhould

be

be removed from his majesty's councils and person.

Henry was confounded at the extravagant nature of these demands, and the bold and peremptory manner in which they were presented. He was enraged at the insolence of his vassals; but his situation and circumstances were such, that he durst not express his resentment. He therefore eluded their proposal with promises of future amendment; and, after having vainly endeavoured to persuade them into a compliance, he at last prorogued the parliament.

During this session, one Martin arrived in England as nuncio from pope Innocent, who had lately succeeded Gregory in the see of Rome. His business was to procure a subsidy of ten thousand marks from the clergy, to enable his holiness to maintain the war against the emperour, who, at the same time, sent ambassadours to England to vindicate his own conduct, and dissuade the prelates from granting any contribution.

The nation was so oppressed by these religious free-booters, that they were glad of any pretence for rejecting his demand; and this they were furnished with by the king, who strictly inhibited the prelates from laying any impost on the fees which they held of

of the crown, to the detriment of his ſervice.

Martin was veſted with higher powers than had ever been beſtowed upon any former nuncio: he was enjoined to ſuſpend, and excommunicate all thoſe who refuſed to comply with his demands; and, though he had been baffled in his late attempt, he did not fail to exerciſe his authority in a moſt arbitrary and tyrannical manner: he exacted the arrears of a grant (amounting to a tenth of all eccleſiaſtical benefices) which had been made for relief of the Chriſtians in Paleſtine, as well as of the contributions for the ſupport of the late pope Gregory; he extorted large ſums from the prelates and religious houſes; and ſeized all the vacant benefices for the uſe of the popes chaplains and relations: in a word, his behaviour was become ſo intolerable, that the Engliſh began to concert meaſures for delivering themſelves from the tyranny of the papal yoke. Nevertheleſs he continued his exactions for ſome time longer; till, at laſt, the clamour againſt him became ſo loud and general, that Henry commanded him to depart the kingdom.

Mean while, Henry had like to have involved himſelf in a war with Alexander, king of Scotland. That prince, after the death of Iſabel, had eſpouſed the daughter of

of Enguerrand de Coucy; and this French alliance gave great umbrage to Henry, who was, ever after, ſuſpicious of the deſigns of Alexander. What further inflamed his jealouſy was a caſtle, called the Hermitage, which the Scottiſh king had built in Niddeſdale, on the border of the two kingdoms; and Henry was ſo incenſed at both theſe meaſures, that, without demanding an explanation, he immediately gave orders for raiſing an army, and fitting out a fleet, to invade Scotland by ſea and land. All the military tenants of the crown were ſummoned to attend him, with horſe and arms, at Newcaſtle upon Tyne, by the beginning of Auguſt; and the king, putting himſelf at their head, began his march towards the borders.

When he had advanced as far as Pentland, he found the Scottiſh army in battle array and ready for action; and, as the forces were nearly equal on both ſides, a bloody engagement muſt have enſued, had it not been happily prevented by the good offices of the earl of Cornwall, the archbiſhop of York, and ſeveral other noblemen, who mediated between the two ſovereigns to ſo good purpoſe, that they at laſt effected an accommodation. By this treaty, the former peace was confirmed, together with the contract of

marriage

marriage between Alexander's ſon, and Henry's eldeſt daughter.

As Henry was now at the head of a numerous army, the nobility adviſed him to employ it in chaſtizing the inſolence of David, prince of Wales, who had lately renewed hoſtilities, and committed great depredations on the Engliſh territories; but, inſtead of purſuing this prudent meaſure, he diſbanded all the forces except three hundred horſe, which he detached under the command of Hubert Fitz-Matthews, to repel the incurſions of the enemy. But this ſmall party was, by no means, ſufficient for the purpoſe. Hubert was immediately defeated by David, who, the preceding day, had gained a victory over the earl of Hereford, and Ralph de Mortimer.

The Welch prince was ſo fully convinced that Henry would attack him with his whole forces, that, in order to ſcreen himſelf from the impending danger, he had applied to the pope for protection, offering to renounce his allegiance to the crown of England, to become a vaſſal to the ſee of Rome, and to pay his holineſs an annual tribute of five hundred marks, the ſum impoſed upon him by the Engliſh monarch.

Innocent was charmed with the propoſal; but, as he was unwilling to diſoblige the king of England, he declined returning a

poſitive anſwer, until he ſhould have examined the matter with greater care and accuracy, and particularly informed himſelf, whether or not the laſt treaty between Henry and David was the effect of compulſion, as the prince of Wales had alledged.

Accordingly he ſent a commiſſion to two Welch abbots, to make a ſtrict and impartial enquiry into the whole tranſaction; and, in caſe it ſhould be found, that David had really been compelled to ſubmit to the terms preſcribed by Henry, they were ordered to abſolve him from his oath, and annul the treaty. The abbots, proud of their commiſſion, arrogantly ſummoned the king of England to appear before them, as if he had been a petty cottager, ſubject to their juriſdiction.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that Henry would quietly digeſt ſuch an intolerable inſult. He immediately ſummoned a parliament, and earneſtly entreated them, to grant him ſuch an aid as might enable him to vindicate the honour of his crown, and chaſtiſe the inſolence of his enemies.

The barons, who were no leſs enraged at the preſumption of the Welch, readily complied with his requeſt, and gave him a ſcutage of forty ſhillings upon every knight's fee, which, from the place where the chief action

action happened during the courſe of the war, was called the ſcutage of Garinac.

Orders were inſtantly iſſued for levying a numerous army, ſo as to be ready to act in the beginning of the Spring; and, in the mean time, David, and all the nobility in South and North Wales, were ſummoned to appear in the king's court at Weſtminſter, on the firſt Thurſday of Lent, there to renew their oaths of duty and allegiance, and anſwer for the depredations they had committed.* This ſummons was punctually obeyed by ſeveral of the Welch barons; but David, who was terrified at the ſpirit diſcovered by Henry and his council, endeavoured to amuſe them with a negociation, which produced no effect.

Mean while Henry continued his warlike preparations with great diligence and vigour: he ſent for a body of troops from Ireland; he ſummoned all his military tenants to meet him at a certain rendezvous; and, entering Wales about the middle of Auguſt, he advanced, without oppoſition, as far as the river Conway.

Cloſe by the ſide of this river, and upon the point of a promontory, which juts out into the ſea, and contributes to form the harbour, and upon that very ſpot where the town of Diganwy ſtood, which was

* A. D. 1245.

once a Roman fortreſs, he built the ſtrong caſtle of Garinac, to check the excurſions of the enemy, and intercept their parties that ſhould attempt to make inroads into the Engliſh borders. This work engroſſed his attention for the ſpace of ten weeks, during which his troops were greatly diſtreſſed for want of proviſion. But, notwithſtanding that, and ſeveral other difficulties, the caſtle was at laſt finiſhed; and Henry, having ſupplied it with a numerous garriſon, returned into England with the reſt of his army.

The Welch were now in a moſt deplorable condition: they were entirely cut off from all communication with Cheſhire; the Iriſh auxiliaries had invaded the iſle of Angleſey, and waſted it with fire and ſword; and a proclamation was made in all the Marches, that no proviſion or merchandize ſhould be carried into Wales, under the ſevereſt penalties; ſo that theſe ancient Britons were cooped up in the mountainous counties of Caernarvon and Merioneth, reduced to the moſt wretched circumſtances, and in danger of periſhing with hunger.

In this lamentable ſituation they remained till the death of prince David, which happened in the beginning of the next year; and, as he left no iſſue, his territories ought to have devolved to his ſiſter Gladys,

or

or her ſon, Roger de Mortimer, the lawful heir of the principality. But the Welch bore ſuch an irreconcilable hatred and antipathy to the Engliſh, that, rather than ſubmit to the government of a native of that country, they broke through the order of ſucceſſion, and ſet up Llewellyn and David Goch, the two ſons of Griffin.

Theſe two powers divided the dominions of their uncle between them; and as they were ſenſibly affected with the miſeries and calamities of their countrymen, they humbly ſued to Henry for a peace, who readily granted their requeſt. By this convention they relinquiſhed all claim to the Cantreds of Ros, Ryuonioc, Dyffryn, Clwyd, and Englefeld, with all the county of Denbigh, as far as the river Conway, but with this proviſo, that the lawful owners of the lands ſhould be confirmed and maintained in their poſſeſſions, on performing the uſual ſervices to the king of England.

Henry, in conſideration of this ceſſion, granted them all the remaining part of North-Wales, on condition that they and their heirs for ever ſhould hold of the Engliſh crown, and furniſh it, when required, with a thouſand foot, and four and twenty horſe, well armed, and appointed to ſerve in Wales and the Marches, and

five hundred men, when their ſervice ſhould be wanted in any other quarter.

The barons were no ſooner returned from the Welch expedition, than they began to concert meaſures for delivering the nation from the tyranny of Rome, which, by the arbitrary proceedings and cruel exactions of the nuncio Martin, was become altogether inſupportable. They beheld with equal grief and indignation, the kingdom drained of its wealth and treaſure, to glut the inſatiable avarice of a Roman pontiff; they obſerved that the clergy, however well affected to their king and country, were but too apt to be drawn into a compliance with the pernicious ſchemes of the nuncios and legates; they had reaſon to think that Henry himſelf had neither the courage and reſolution, nor perhaps even the will and inclination to redreſs this public grievance: and they, therefore, reſolved to act by them in authority, and exert their utmoſt efforts in putting a ſtop to ſuch a ſcandalous impoſition.

Accordingly, without waiting for the protection of his majeſty, on whom they could place but little dependance, they ordered the governours of ports to ſeize all thoſe who ſhould be detected in bringing bulls and mandates into the kingdom; and this order was ſo well obeyed, that, in a lit-

tle

tle time, a meſſenger from Rome was apprehended on his way to the nuncio, to whom he was carrying a large cargo of theſe commiſſions, empowering him to exact money from the clergy on various pretences.

The nuncio complained to the king of this inſult offered to a ſervant of his holineſs; and Henry, with his uſual puſillanimity, ordered the papers to be reſtored. But the barons remonſtrated with great vehemence againſt the proceedings of the nuncio; they repreſented to his majeſty the infinite prejudice he did both to himſelf and his ſubjects, by encouraging the exactions of the pope; and in order to convince him of the truth of the aſſertion, they produced a ſchedule containing an account of the value of all the benefices enjoyed in England by Italian eccleſiaſtics; and this amounted to no leſs than ſixty thouſand marks per annum, a ſum which at that time exceeded the revenue of the crown.

Henry, who had probably never thought on the ſubject before, was, at once, confounded and enraged at this information. But ſuch was his poor and degenerate ſpirit, that for fear of incurring the reſentment of the pope, he would not venture to redreſs the grievance. Nevertheleſs, he allowed the barons

barons to ſend ambaſſadors to prefer their complaints to the general council at Lyons, to repreſent the hardſhips which the nation ſuffered from the encroachments of the Roman clergy, and to demand immediate redreſs.

Accordingly, theſe remonſtrances were drawn up in writing, and committed to the care of Lawrence de St. Martin, agent for the king, Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk, William de Canteloup, Ralph Fitz-Nicholas, Philip Baſſet, John Fitz-Geoffry, and William de Poweric, a clergyman, deputed by the nobility, and the ambaſſadors being likewiſe furniſhed with ſome verbal inſtructions, immediately ſet out on their journey.

In the mean time, as they were well acquainted with the dexterity and addreſs of the court of Rome, in making delays and evaſions, they reſolved to purſue a more ſpeedy and effectual courſe. With this view they agreed to meet at Dunſtaple, under pretence of a tournament, in order to contrive the proper means for carrying their deſign into execution.

The king apprized of their intention, and alarmed at the conſequences that might probably enſue from ſuch bold and vigorous meaſures, ſtrictly forbade them to keep their appointmeut. But their power was too

too great, their numbers were too conſiderable, and their reſolutions were too firmly fixed to be intimidated by ſuch a prohibition.

Regardleſs of the king's diſpleaſure, and bent on the execution of their ſcheme, they aſſembled at the place appointed; and after ſome conferences on the ſubject, ſent a knight to the nuncio, commanding him in their name, to quit the kingdom without delay.

The knight diſcharged his commiſſion with greater fidelity than politeneſs; for upon the nuncio's aſking him by whoſe authority he brought ſuch a meſſage, he anſwered, by the authority of the whole nation, adding, that if in three days he ſhould ſtill be found in the kingdom, he muſt expect to be hewn in pieces.

Martin, alarmed at the impending danger, preferred his complaint to the king; but Henry told him he was unable to protect him from the fury of the barons, in conſequence of which the other demanded a paſſport, and departed immediately, to the great joy and ſatisfaction of the whole nation.*

The

* M. Paris ſays, that Henry fell into a violent paſſion, and wiſhed the nuncio to the devil; but being ſoon appeaſed by his courtiers, he ſent Robert Norris, a marſhal of his palace, to conduct him ſafely to Dover.

The pope was ſo enraged at this inſult offered to himſelf in the perſon of his nuncio, that he broke out into the following exclamation, "I ſee plainly I muſt make "peace with the emperor, that I may have "him to humble thoſe petty princes; for "the great dragon being once appeaſed, I "ſhall be better able to cruſh thoſe ſmaller ſerpents."

Mean while, the Engliſh ambaſſadors arrived at Lyons, and preferred their letter to the council, in which the pope preſided in perſon; and Innocent was ſo confounded at the contents, which were publickly read, that he had not a ſingle word to anſwer in his own vindication.

The ambaſſadors waited for ſome time, in expectation of his holineſs making a reply; but finding that he remained ſilent, one of them began to give a more full and circumſtantial account of the grievances of the Engliſh nation. He complained of the annual tribute of a thouſand marks, which John had engaged to pay to the Roman pontiff, as a groſs and ſcandalous impoſition, which that prince had no right to lay upon his ſubjects. He maintained that neither he, nor any king of England, could ſubject his kingdom to a foreign yoke, without the conſent of his barons; and as that conſent had never been obtained, his ſubmiſſion to the

Roman

Roman ſee was, of conſequence, null and of no effect. He inveighed, with great acrimony, againſt the clauſe *non-obſtante*,* inſerted by the pope in all his bulls; a clauſe entirely deſtructive of the rights of patrons, and of all the liberties of the Anglican church. And, finally, he enlarged on the extortion of the legates and nuncios, and on all the inſtances of papal oppreſſion to which the Engliſh had lately been expoſed.

In vain did the ambaſſadors expect a ſatisfactory anſwer to their remonſtrance; the pope took care to prevent the affair from being brought before the council. All they could obtain, was a general promiſe of redreſs; and at laſt, finding they were only amuſed with evaſive excuſes, they preſented to the council a proteſt againſt the tribute, and then withdrew.

Though Innocent had taken no ſteps to ſatisfy the Engliſh ambaſſadors during their abode at Lyons, yet they were no ſooner gone than he affected to take their complaints into conſideration. But this was a mere

* When the pope had a mind to diſpoſe of a benefice, he inſerted in his bull this clauſe, *non-obſtante*, &c. i. e. "The right of patronage, or any other privilege to the contrary, notwithſtanding;" a clauſe which entirely annihilated the rights of biſhops, abbots, monaſteries, and lay-patrons.

mere pretext. He was ſenſible their remonſtrance had left a deep impreſſion upon the minds of ſome members of the council, who might poſſibly be tempted to make a propoſal for redreſſing their grievances.

He therefore reſolved to prevent any ſtep of this nature, by declaring that he himſelf would reform all the abuſes of which they had complained; and accordingly publiſhed two bulls in favour of the Engliſh nation: the firſt allowed patrons to exerciſe the right of preſentation; and the ſecond imported, that when an Italian incumbent ſhould die, or reſign, the benefice might be granted to a native. But theſe privileges were of no avail, ſo long as the article of *non-obſtante* continued in force.

This was an objection, however, which none of the members thought proper to make, though it certainly would have been made by the Engliſh envoys, had they been preſent; and it was from an apprehenſion of this very circumſtance, that he delayed the publication of his bulls till after their departure.

But though Innocent had indulged the Engliſh with two imaginary favours, he was unwilling to deliver them from a real grievance. Far from relinquiſhing his claim to the annual tribute, he wrote comminatory letters

letters to the prelates, enjoining them, on pain of excommunication, to confirm and ſubſcribe the charter by which John had acknowledged his ſubjection to the ſee of Rome.

How averſe ſoever the biſhops were to ſuch a meaſure, they were yet obliged to comply, for fear of incurring the reſentment of his holineſs; though Henry himſelf ſhewed a ſpirit and reſolution (if indeed it was any thing more than a mere bravado) which he had never before diſcovered; he ſwore that though the biſhops had warped, he would himſelf maintain the liberties of the kingdom, and renounce his allegiance to the Roman ſee.

Whether or not Henry was ſerious in making this declaration, we will not take upon us to determine; certain it is, the pope was ſo highly incenſed at the ſuppoſed injury, that he endeavoured to perſuade the king of France, during an interview at Cluny, to expel him from his dominions, or reduce him to an abſolute ſubmiſſion to the court of Rome.

But Lewis excuſed himſelf from engaging in an undertaking which was as inconſiſtent with the dictates of equity and juſtice, as with the terms of the truce ſubſiſting between France and England, and his cloſe affinity with Henry, who was his

brother-in-law. In his turn, he propoſed an accommodation between the emperor and his holineſs; but the pontiff evaded the propoſal, with a thouſand frivolous pretences.*

Indeed he was ſo far from being diſpoſed to a reconciliation, that he ſoon after hired ſome ruffians to aſſaſſinate Frederic, and raiſed up a competitor to his throne in the perſon of Henry, landgrave of Thuringia, whoſe title he endeavoured to maintain by contributions, as if it had been a religious war. The pope could not be more thoroughly irritated at the remonſtrance of the Engliſh, than they were at his refuſing to redreſs their grievances; but Innocent, conſcious of his great power and influence, which was entirely founded in his own aſſurance, and the folly of his enemies, deſpiſed their reſentment, and proceeded in his arbitrary and oppreſſive meaſures, with double rigour and ſeverity.

He now endeavoured, in violation of the laws of the land, to oblige Engliſh gentlemen to try their cauſes before foreign judicatures; he enjoined the biſhops, on pain of excommunication, to furniſh a number of knights to ſerve in the army of the church, a whole year, at their own expence;

* A. D. 1246.

pence; and, by his ſole authority, he granted the profits of all the vacant benefices, within the province of Canterbury for one year, to archbiſhop Boniface, to the prejudice of the lawful patrons. He exacted the ſix thouſand marks which had been aſſeſſed on the prelates by his nuncio; the twentieth of all eccleſiaſtical revenues, according to a decree of the council of Lyons; one third of the income of all benefices, whoſe yearly value exceeded one hundred marks; and a moiety of the prebends and livings of non-reſident canons and clergymen. All theſe exactions, according to the beſt calculation, amounted to eighty thouſand marks, a ſum thought equal to the whole ſpecie of the kingdom; and as this was to be exported for three years ſucceſſively, it could not fail to involve the nation in the utmoſt calamity and diſtreſs,

A parliament being aſſembled in Midlent at London, theſe grievances were taken into conſideration; and as they were unwilling to come to an open rupture with the pope, they reſolved once more to renew their complaints to his holineſs. Accordingly three letters were forthwith diſpatched to the court of Rome, by the king, the prelates, and the barons; and theſe were committed to the care of William de Powick, and Henry de la Mare, who were like-

wiſe furniſhed with ſome verbal inſtructions.

Mean while, the pope proceeded in his arbitrary and oppreſſive meaſures, with greater tyranny and deſpotiſm than ever. He claimed the perſonal eſtates of eccleſiaſtics who died inteſtate; all goods unjuſtly acquired, provided the right owner was not known or could not be found; all effects procured by uſury, and all legacies granted for reſtitution and pious uſes; and he appointed the Dominicans, whom he had favoured with privileges ſubverſive of all order and government, to levy theſe exactions.

In vain did Henry endeavour to oppoſe theſe papal encroachments; the commiſſioners proceeded in the execution of their office, alike regardleſs of the diſpleaſure of the king and the complaints of the people. Indeed, he had ventured to prohibit the collection of the ſix thouſand marks, till the return of the agents; but, notwithſtanding this prohibition, it was levied by the biſhops of Norwich, Lincoln, Worceſter, London, and Coventry, who were empowered and enjoined by the pope, to fulminate the higheſt cenſures of the church againſt all recuſants.

In the mean time the ambaſſadors returned from Rome, and, in a parliament which was

was held at Wincheſter, gave an account of the bad reception they had met with, and the ill ſucceſs of their negociation. Innocent had treated them with the utmoſt contempt and diſdain; avowed his reſolution of perſiſting in his odious meaſures, and openly declated, that, rather than relinquiſh the proſecution of his ſchemes, he would proceed to the ſame extremities with Henry, as he had done with the emperor.

The parliament, enraged at theſe inſolent menaces, perſuaded the king to renew his late prohibition; and a proclamation was accordingly made, in every county, forbidding, under the moſt ſevere penalties, the collection or remittance of any money for the uſe of his holineſs.

Innocent, in his turn, was highly incenſed at theſe vigorous proceedings, and immediately ſent orders to William de Canteloup, biſhop of Worceſter, to cauſe the contribution-money to be paid to his nuncio, at the New Temple, by the middle of Auguſt, on pain of ſuſpenſion and excommunication.

Henry, at firſt, ſeemed reſolute to maintain the liberties of the nation; but he was ſoon intimidated into a compliance, by the menaces of Walter and other biſhops, and by the remonſtrances of his own brother

Richard, who, forgetting his duty to his king, his brother, and his country, basely espoused the cause of his holiness, from whom he had received, as the reward of his perfidy, a grant of the money arising from the commission of vows made to engage in the crusade.

Henry was sensible of the terrible consequences which an interdict had produced in the reign of his father; he saw the deplorable condition to which the emperor was reduced by his quarrels with Innocent, who had raised up the greatest part of the Christian world against him; and he dreaded the same fate to himself, should he provoke the indignation of that furious and revengeful pontiff.

Influenced, therefore, by these considerations, which were sufficient to have shaken the constancy of a more couragious prince than Henry, he was at last obliged to submit; and the people were delivered over as a prey to the pope's legates and nuncios, who, thus triumphant over all opposition, gave an unbounded loose to their rapine and extortion, and fleeced the nation with equal insolence and cruelty.

The abbots and clergy complained loudly of these intolerable extortions, to the next parliament; but the spirit of the nation seemed to be wholly subdued, and the faction

tion of the pope, armed with the terrors of ecclesiastical censures, and supported by the interest of the earl of Cornwall, bore down all before it. The only thing they could do in their present deplorable situation, was to send new agents to Rome, with a fresh remonstrance to Innocent, representing the miseries and calamities of the nation, and how impossible it was for the kingdom to subsist under such insupportable burthens; but this address was as little regarded as the former.*

Innocent must certainly have been a pontiff of great courage and capacity, otherwise he could never have maintained his authority in England, usurped and ill-founded as it was, with so much vigour and resolution, considering the desperate situation of his affairs in Germany.

The landgrave of Thuringia had lately died of grief, occasioned by the loss of a pitched battle, in which he had been totally routed, and most of his friends left dead upon the spot; but Innocent, whose rancour against Frederic seemed rather to encrease than diminish by length of time, resolved to raise up another competitor to his throne, in the person of William count of Holland, a young prince not above twenty years of age.

He

* A. D. 1247.

He had expended above fifty thouſand pounds in ſupporting the pretenſions of the landgrave; and now, to defray the expences of this new project, he ſent four cardinals, veſted with legantine powers, into different parts of Europe, to raiſe contributions. One of them, in his way to Denmark, happening to touch at Lynne, and to ſtay three months in the place, exacted four thouſand marks from the Engliſh clergy, under the title of procurations, and brought back above fifteen thouſand more from the country to which he was ſent.

It was a privilege peculiar to the Engliſh nation, that no legate ſhould ſet foot in the kingdom, unleſs at the particular invitation of the king; but this right, which was more ſpecious than ſolid, was always eluded by the pope, who beſtowed the powers of legation upon perſons who were not veſted with the character.

About this period, two Franciſcan friars came over to England to aſk a ſupply for the pope, not by way of force and compulſion; but only by begging as mendicants, for which purpoſe they obtained a licence from the king.

This they had no ſooner procured, than they aſſumed powers of a very different and a more important nature; ſent threatening letters to the prelates and monaſteries; and de-

demanded ſix thouſand marks of the biſhop of Lincoln, four thouſand of the abbot of St. Albans, and the like exorbitant ſums of all the other prelates.

But with theſe unreaſonable exactions the prelates refuſed to comply, without the approbation of parliament; and the pope, provoked at their refuſal, ſent over one of his chaplains, named Marino, with more than legatine powers, to inforce the demand. The biſhops appealed as well to the court of Rome, as to the parliament; but receiving no relief from either of theſe quarters, they were at laſt obliged to compound for eleven thouſand marks, and the monaſteries at the like unreaſonable rate.

By this time Henry's character was become truly contemptible; complaining daily of the intolerable extortion of the pope, and yet unable to oppoſe it; deſpiſed and hated by his ſubjects, whom he embraced every opportunity of oppreſſing; and inſulted and intimidated by the Roman pontiff, of whoſe cenſures he ſtood greatly in awe, and whoſe yoke, though in his heart he hated, he had not the courage and reſolution to ſhake off.

He had always been remarkable for his attachment and partiality to foreigners, and he now gave a freſh inſtance of this unhappy diſpoſition.

diſpoſition. Peter de Savoye, earl of Richmond, returning from abroad with ſome young ladies of Provence, whom he intended to match among the Engliſh nobility, two of them were immediately married to the king's wards, one to Edmund Lacy, earl of Lincoln, and the other to Richard de Burgh; and Peter himſelf was indulged with a grant of all the honour of Aquila in Suſſex.

About the ſame time three of his uterine brothers, named Guy de Luſignan, and William and Aymer de Valence, arrived with their ſiſter Alice to ſhare in the king's favours. The firſt was gratified with a conſiderable ſum of money, with which he returned to his own country. William was knighted, and obtained a grant of the honour of Hertford; Aymer, being in orders, was at firſt maintained by contributions from the clergy, and ſent to proſecute his ſtudies at Oxford; but he had not remained long in that ſeat of learning, when he was provided with ſeveral wealthy benefices, and, at laſt, advanced to the ſee of Wincheſter; and Alice was married to the young earl of Warenne.

Theſe foreigners were followed, the next year, by Beatrix, counteſs of Provence, now a widow, and her brother Thomas, late count of Flanders, and were both graciouſly

cioufly received, and magnificently entertained by Henry, though his circumſtances were ſuch, that he could hardly defray the ordinary expence of his houſhold; and for want of ready money, he was obliged to have recourſe to the ſhameful expedient of plundering his ſubjects of ſuch neceſſaries and proviſions as he wanted.

But foreign favourites were not the only perſons that availed themſelves of the king's folly, and contributed to exhauſt his finances; his own brother Richard never failed to take the advantage of his neceſſities.

The Jews and Flemings, who travelled to England for wool, had clipped the coin to ſuch a degree, that it was almoſt diminiſhed one third in its value, in conſequence of which, the price of proviſions was advanced, to the great prejudice of the poorer part of the nation. As this grievance required an immediate redreſs, people were forbidden to take damaged or clipped money, and ordered to bring it to the king's mint, where it ſhould be changed.

Richard was too wiſe to neglect ſuch a favourable opportunity: he demanded the payment of a ſum of money which he had lent to the king upon uſury, and preſſed and teazed him with ſo much importunity, that Henry was obliged to make him a grant

grant for ſeven years of the farm of the mint, for a third part of the profits. Theſe profits were very conſiderable, eſpecially at a time of recoinage, when the proprietor had a monopoly of the change; and, according to the beſt calculation, were ſuppoſed to amount to no leſs than twenty thouſand pounds.

By this time Henry was reduced to ſuch neceſſities, that he was once more obliged to ſolicit a ſupply from his parliament, which, for that purpoſe, was convoked at Weſtminſter on the ninth of February; * but the barons upbraided him with his prodigality and profuſion, and abſolutely refuſed to comply with his requeſt.

They bitterly inveighed againſt his immoderate attachment and partiality to foreigners, and his neglect and contempt of his natural ſubjects. They complained of his retaining vacant benefices in his own hands, diſcouraging commerce by loading it with unreaſonable duties, and beſtowing, of his own authority, and without the advice of his parliament, the firſt poſts of the kingdom, upon perſons deſtitute of merit and abilities.

Henry, perceiving from this bold and ſpirited remonſtrance, that he had nothing to expect from the complaiſance of the barons

* A. D. 1248.

rons, prorogued them immediately, that he might have time to concert the proper measures for maintaining his authority.

Whatever conduct his natural disposition might have led him to pursue, the foreigners took care to persuade him, that courage and resolution were the only means of humbling the pride of those insolent vassals, and keeping them within the bounds of their duty and allegiance.

Accordingly, in the next meeting, he complained loudly of their arrogance and presumption, in daring to impose laws upon him, to which they themselves would never submit; he observed, that every master of a private family chose his own confidants and counsellors, and retained or dismissed his domestics at pleasure; * whilst he,

* This reasoning is not more common and plausible, than it is fallacious and absurd. It may do extremely well in despotic governments, where the sovereign considers his subjects only as so many animals created on purpose to minister to his pleasure and pastime; but is absolutely ridiculous in a limited monarchy, where every, the meanest, individual has the same right to his life, his liberty and property, as the greatest personage in the kingdom. If a master of a family employs bad servants, he, and he only, can suffer by such a step: but, if a sovereign commits the management of public affairs to weak or worthless ministers, every member of the society is affected, and every member of the society has a right to remonstrate, and even to remonstrate till the grievance is redressed.

though a ſovereign, was treated like a ſlave by his own ſubjects, and obliged to comply with their humour in every particular; but, inſtead of changing his miniſters, according to their direction, he was reſolved to be maſter in his own kingdom, and convince them that it was their duty to obey. With regard to their grievances, he amuſed them with ſome general promiſes of redreſs; and concluded with demanding ſuch an aid as might enable him to recover the provinces on the continent which his anceſtors had poſſeſſed.

The barons were fully convinced, that this language was only a vain boaſt; that theſe ſentiments were not the natural expreſſions of Henry's own diſpoſition, but only infuſed into him by his artful and perfidious counſellors; and that he had neither the courage nor capacity to execute what he had threatened.

They therefore told him, with great compoſure, that, ſeeing he had no inclination to reform his conduct, they would take care not to impoveriſh themſelves by granting ſubſidies to gratify the avarice of foreigners, under the pretence of a neceſſary war. Henry was ſo much alarmed at the reſolute and determined air with which they delivered this declaration, that he diſſolved them

them immediately, leſt they ſhould proceed to more vigorous and diſagreeable meaſures.

Mean while, as his coffers were entirely empty, he was obliged to ſell his plate and jewels, which immediately found purchaſers among the citizens of London; a circumſtance that piqued him greatly, as they had always pleaded poverty when he aſked a ſupply.

In revenge for this ſuppoſed affront, he eſtabliſhed a new fair at Weſtminſter, during which he prohibited all trade in London; and, inſtead of liſtening to the complaints of the merchants on this ſubject, he ſpent the Chriſtmas-holidays in the city, and obliged them to preſent him with a large ſum for his new-year's gift. Nor was he even ſatisfied with this impoſition; for he ſoon after extorted from them another preſent of two thouſand pounds ſterling.

As theſe ſums were, by no means, ſufficient to ſupply his wants, he had recourſe to another expedient; he endeavoured to borrow money from the barons, biſhops, abbots and merchants; but, notwithſtanding the mean and cringing arts he employed, he met with little ſucceſs. Indeed he rendered his ſcheme ineffectual by his own folly and imprudence. In the writs for this loan he declared, that he intended to attack the dominions of the

king of France, which were then under the protection of his holiness, as Lewis had been some time engaged in assisting the Christians in Palestine.

That prince had met with a series of disasters in the course of this expedition.* His army had been entirely routed, himself taken prisoner, and his country drained of men and money. William Longue-Espeé, who, together with two hundred knights, had attended Lewis in this crusade, was slain in the battle fought on the banks of the Nile, after having acquired great glory and renown by his courage and intrepidity.

The spirit of engaging in crusades was so prevalent at this time, that Henry himself, oppressed with debts, and at variance with his parliament as he was, assumed the cross, and professed himself a soldier of Christ. What could be his motive in taking such a step it is hard to determine. Perhaps he considered this as the best expedient for paying his debts, as it would furnish him with a pretext for asking a subsidy from parliament, for the purposes of the expedition; or else he wanted to put himself under the pope's protection, which, he imagined, would screen him against any

* A. D. 1249.

any deſigns that might be formed to his prejudice. *

Indeed he ſeems to have ſuſpected ſomething of this nature. Innocent had deſired leave of him to paſs a few weeks at Bourdeaux; but, as there was a ſhort and eaſy paſſage from that place to England, he declined complying with his requeſt immediately, and amuſed him with general promiſes of taking the matter into conſideration; an anſwer that probably offended the pontiff.

His brother Richard too, had, ſoon after the birth of his ſon Edmund, taken a ſuſpicious journey to Rome, attended by the earl of Glouceſter, and ſeveral noblemen and prelates. He had been received at Lyon with great pomp and magnificence, and admitted to ſeveral private conferences with his holineſs, the ſubject of which was kept a profound ſecret; and, as he had always been the chief of the malecontents, Henry might naturally imagine that ſome deſigns were hatching againſt him.

Henry's example in taking the croſs, was followed by five hundred knights; many of whom had diſpoſed of their eſtates to defray the expences of their voyage. Theſe were extremely impatient

* A. D. 1250.

to ſet out on their journey to Paleſtine, that they might have an opportunity of ſignalizing their courage againſt the enemies of the Chriſtian faith; but, as Henry had not yet made the neceſſary preparations for his intended expedition, he ſtrictly forbad them to croſs the ſea, until he himſelf ſhould be ready; and Innocent, who was highly pleaſed with the zeal which Henry had manifeſted for the Chriſtian cauſe, confirmed the prohibition.

He likewiſe made him a grant of a tenth of all eccleſiaſtical revenues in England, Ireland, and his other dominions for the ſpace of three years, to be collected by certain biſhops, and depoſited in places of ſafety, until the king ſhould begin his journey. Henry, encouraged by this indulgence, began to prepare for the expedition, or, at leaſt, to ſave and amaſs money, which was probably the only view in the whole of this undertaking.

He retrenched the expences of his houſhold, ordered a ſtrict inquiſition to be made into treſpaſſes on the royal foreſts, appointed commiſſioners to examine into eſcheats and alienations of the crown-demeſnes; and laid a heavy talliage on the Jews, who, whenever the king was diſtreſſed

* A. D. 1251.

treſſed for money, were always ſure to be fleeced ſeverely.

Indeed the tax with which theſe people were ſaddled, may be conſidered as an act of juſtice, rather than oppreſſion: they had been deeply concerned in debaſing the coin, and convicted of forging falſe deeds; and it was for a crime of this laſt nature that Aaron of York was fined in four marks of gold, and fourteen thouſand of ſilver.

Philip Lovel was accuſed of bribery by the Jews from whom he had collected the talliage; and though the accuſation was falſe, he was condemned to pay the ſum of a thouſand marks; and a company of Italian merchants, called Cauſini, were proſecuted for uſury and extortion, and obliged to compound for money.

Theſe ſupplies were extremely ſeaſonable, as Henry's coffers were now entirely exhauſted, and he wanted money for various occaſions. Simon de Montfort, earl of Leiceſter, had been employed for a conſiderable time in reducing the mutinous barons of Guienne; he had taken and demoliſhed the caſtles of Fronſac, Gramont, and Caſtillon, and ſubdued the greateſt part of the country; and now arriving in England, to ſolicit a freſh ſum of money, in order to enable him to proſecute his ſucceſs, he received three thouſand marks out of thoſe exactions,

exactions, with which he returned and raiſed a body of Brabantins and croſs-bow men, who contributed greatly to the entire reduction of the province.

Henry was likewiſe apprehenſive of an approaching war with Scotland. Alexander II. dying, was ſucceeded by his ſon of the ſame name, who, though ſtill a boy, began to ſeize ſome places on the borders of England.

Henry forthwith advanced into the north with a numerous army, in order to oppoſe his progreſs; but before he proceeded to hoſtilities, he ſent John Manſel to make propoſals of an accommodation. Theſe were readily accepted, and a match immediately concluded between Margaret, Henry's eldeſt daughter, and the king of Scotland, who ſet out for York on a viſit to the Engliſh monarch, from whom he received the honour of knighthood.

Next day the young couple, each of them in the tenth year of their age, were married with great pomp and ſplendour, the queen-mother of Scotland, and moſt of the nobility of both kingdoms aſſiſting at the ſolemnity. Alexander, on this occaſion, did homage to Henry for Lothian, and the other territories which he held of the crown of England, but abſolutely refuſed to acknowledge the dependence of his whole kingdom,

kingdom, without the advice and conſent of his parliament; and his excuſe was readily admitted. In a few days after the nuptials, he received a bond for five thouſand marks as the portion of his wife, with whom he returned to his own country; and the young queen was accompanied thither by Maude de Canteloup, and ſome other ladies who were entruſted with the care of her education.

The tranquillity of England being thus ſecured, Henry applied his whole attention to the cruſade, which the pope now preſſed him to begin; and accordingly he bound himſelf by a new oath, that he would ſpend four years in that ſervice, and fixed the time of his departure at Midſummer.* In the beginning of the year, while he was celebrating the feſtival of the Confeſſor, he convened all the prelates at London, and produced the pope's bull, directing them to pay him the tenth of their revenue.

But the biſhops exclaimed againſt this exaction; and though Henry offered to accept it as a free gift of their own, rather than a tax impoſed by the pope, they ſtill continued to elude his propoſal, declaring that they could take no ſtep in a matter of this conſequence, without the advice of

* A. D. 1252.

of the two archbiſhops, who were then abſent.

The pope was no ſooner informed of this oppoſition, than, in order to prevent all further delays, and puniſh the clergy for their refractory behaviour, he furniſhed Henry with freſh bulls, granting him a twentieth of all eccleſiaſtical revenues, a tenth of all lands of the prelates, the cruſade commutation money, and the profits ariſing from ſtolen goods, uſury and legacies for charitable uſes; at the ſame time he took the king and his dominions under his immediate protection.

Henry had ſtill another reſource for filling his coffers; he laid a talliage on all his demeſnes, as well as upon thoſe which had been alienated from the crown, and were now in the hands of the nobility; and even the late conqueſts in Wales were ſaddled with the ſame impoſition.

Mean while, Henry's departure was delayed by ſome diſturbances which had lately happened in Gaſcony. Deputies arrived from that province, complaining of the hardſhips which the natives ſuffered from the arbitrary and oppreſſive government of the earl of Leiceſter, who, at the ſame time, came over to vindicate his character from the aſperſions thrown upon it by his enemies.

He

He was no ſooner landed in England, than he repaired to court, and not only denied the crimes that were laid to his charge, but even expreſſed his ſurpriſe at the king's credulity and ingratitude in liſtening to ſuch frivolous complaints againſt a man, who had ſerved him with ſo much fidelity, and ſpent his whole fortune in a poſt, by which others were wont to acquire immenſe riches. Henry replied, that far from believing the accuſations to be juſt, he would ſend commiſſioners into Guienne, to examine into the behaviour of the Gaſcons; and, in the mean time, in order to convince him that he was fully ſatisfied with his conduct, he furniſhed him with a large ſum of money, and ordered him to prepare for returning to his government.

The Gaſcons, appriſed of Henry's intention, diſpatched the archbiſhop of Bourdeaux to renew their complaints, and deſire another governour; and, during this prelate's abode at London, the deputies returned from Gaſcony, and gave an account of the reſult of their enquiry. They ſaid that Leiceſter, indeed, had treated ſome lords of that country with a good deal of rigour and ſeverity, but with far leſs, however, than their factious and turbulent behaviour deſerved.

Though

Though the conduct of the earl was ſufficiently vindicated by this report, the archbiſhop would, by no means, conſent to his return; he aſſured the king that if he ſhould be ſent back, the whole province would riſe in arms, and, perhaps, renounce their allegiance to the Engliſh crown. Henry, alarmed at this intelligence, reſolved to ſacrifice Leiceſter to the reſentment of his enemies; and ordered the articles of his impeachment to be drawn up, and laid before his peers.

Leiceſter was ſurpriſed, but not intimidated, at this change in the king's behaviour; he determined to defend himſelf with that ſpirit and reſolution which he had always diſcovered on former occaſions. With this view he engaged in his intereſt the earls of Cornwall and Glouceſter, and ſeveral other noblemen, who promiſed to ſtand by him at all events.

Encouraged by this aſſurance, he appeared in court, and vindicated himſelf in ſuch a manner as ſeemed to ſatisfy his judges, who, indeed, were reſolved to acquit him before the trial began.

The archbiſhop was ſo confounded at the partiality of the bench, that he immediatoly dropped the proſecution, and Henry himſelf was enraged to ſuch a degree, that he broke out into ſome virulent expreſſi-

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ons againſt Montfort, who boldly accuſed him of ingratitude, and demanded the recompence he had ſo frequently promiſed him for his many and faithful ſervices. The king replied, in a rage of indignation, "that he did not think himſelf obliged to "perform his promiſe to a traitor;" and the earl forgetting, or, perhaps, not regarding to whom he ſpoke, told him, "he "lied, and if he was not a king, he would "make him eat his words;" adding, "that he did not believe he was a Chriſtian, "or that he ever went to confeſſion." "Yes," anſwered the king, "I am a Chriſ-"tian, and have often been at confeſſion." "What ſignifies confeſſion," replies the earl, "without repentance." "I never re-"pented any thing ſo much," ſaid Henry, "as my having beſtowed ſo many favours "upon you who are ſo deſtitute of grati-"tude and decorum."

So ſaying, he would have arreſted him on the ſpot, had he not been intimidated by the preſence of ſo many barons, who were ready to protect him. Notwithſtanding this violent altercation, in which it is hard to ſay, whether the king's folly or the earl's inſolence was moſt conſpicuous, Henry was ſo conſcious of Leiceſter's power and influence, that he not only concealed his reſentment, but even liſtened to terms

of accommodation: but though he was reconciled to him in outward appearance, he could never forgive him in his heart, nor ever after behold him without horror.

How much ſoever Henry might be exaſperated againſt Leiceſter on account of his arrogant and inſolent behaviour, he was yet obliged to ſend him back to Gaſcony, as well becauſe he was afraid to appoint another governour, as in order to prevent him from hatching any deſign to the prejudice of the kingdom; but as he knew this ſtep would be extremely diſagreeable to the Gaſcons, he took care to flatter them with the hopes of being one day delivered from the tyranny of the earl; for which purpoſe he, by an authentic deed, conveyed that province and tbe iſle of Oleron to his eldeſt ſon Edward, reſerving to himſelf the ſovereignty for life; and ſuch of the natives as were in England did homage to the young prince.

Mean while, Leiceſter repaired to his government, inflamed with reſentment againſt his enemies, and he was no ſooner arrived, than he ſet the whole province in a flame: he renewed the hoſtilities which the truce had ſuſpended, and attacked the nobility with great fury; but the violence of his paſſion defeated its own purpoſe; he was at laſt beſieged in Montaban, and reduced

to

to ſuch extremity, that he was obliged to purchaſe a capitulation, by granting liberty to all the priſoners.

Mortified at this diſgrace, he reſigned his government, and retired into France, after having gratified his reſentment againſt Henry, by betraying three of the ſtrongeſt caſtles to the rebels, and involved the province in all the horrors and calamities of a civil war.

Theſe troubles were not only productive of infinite miſchief to the inhabitants, but had well nigh deprived the crown of England of that valuable country.

Alphonſo X. king of Caſtile, taking the advantage of theſe commotions, trumped up a claim to part of it, founded upon a grant which had been made by Henry II. and Eleanor of Guienne to Alphonſo VIII. who had married their daughter. But not depending ſolely upon the validity of his claim, and reſolving to make good his pretenſions by force of arms, he engaged Gaſton de Berne, the viſcounts of Fronſac and Caſtillon, and ſeveral other noblemen in his intereſt, and the whole province declared for Alphonſo, except the city of Bourdeaux, and the adjoining territory, which were likewiſe in the moſt imminent danger of being loſt, if ſpeedy aſſiſtance did not arrive from England.*

* A. D. 1253.

The pope, who juſtly conſidered the king of England as one of his richeſt and moſt dutiful vaſſals, interpoſed his good offices on this occaſion, and ſolemnly excommunicating all the adherents of Alphonſo, Henry reſolved to go thither in perſon.

With this view he iſſued writs commanding a general muſter of all thoſe who were obliged to have arms, that they might be ready to keep watch and ward in the towns and cities, and maintain the peace and tranquillity of the kinghom during his abſence.

His next care, was to collect a ſufficient fund for defraying the expence of the expedition. For this purpoſe, he levied an aid upon his own demeſnes; he ſummoned all thoſe who poſſeſſed fifteen pounds a year, by military tenure, to come and receive the honour of knighthood; and he raiſed money, by diſpenſing with the execution of ſome ordinances made againſt the Jews.* He had likewiſe a right to demand a ſcutage of

* Theſe ordinances were; That no Jews ſhould reſide in England, unleſs they did homage to the king, nor be allowed to keep any other ſchools than they had in the time of John: that they ſhould anſwer to the pariſh-miniſters for the dues of all the members of their ſociety; ſhould eat no fleſh in Lent, wear the table of the law on their breaſts, and ſettle in no town without a ſpecial licence. *Carte.*

of all his military tenants, for the knighting of his eldeſt ſon, and even to fix the rate of it by his own authority; yet, as he imagined it would be more agreeable to his ſubjects to leave the determination of that point to their own generoſity, he aſſembled a parliament at Weſtminſter, hoping that the barons would, of their own accord, grant a larger ſum than he could have ventured to aſſeſs.

In this parliament, which met on the fourth of May, he laid before them a particular account of the diſtreſsful ſituation of Gaſcony, and earneſtly entreated them to grant him a ſupply equal to the neceſſity of his affairs. After long diſputes, the laity agreed to a ſcutage of forty ſhillings a knight's fee; and the prelates granted the tenths of their revenues, for the ſpace of three years, agreeably to the pope's bull, which they had formerly rejected. But they complained of the king's having over-ruled the elections to ſees and abbies, in violation of the firſt article of the Magna Charta, which provided for the liberties of the church.

Henry owned the complaint to be juſt; and promiſed to redreſs the grievance. He confeſſed that he had ſometimes ſtretched the prerogative of the crown beyond its due limits; but that he was firmly reſolved

to alter his conduct, and would make it his ſtudy, for the future, to obſerve the charters with the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs.

Accordingly he aſſembled all the barons and prelates in Weſtminſter-Hall, where every individual appeared with a lighted taper in his hand, the king himſelf ſtanding with his hand upon his breaſt, as a mark of his ſincerity.* Then the archbiſhop of Canterbury denounced a moſt dreadful imprecation againſt all thoſe who ſhould oppoſe the execution of the charters; or ſhould in any way violate, diminiſh, or alter, the laws and conſtitution of the kingdom. This anethema being pronounced, the two charters were read with an audible voice, and confirmed by the king; and each perſon, daſhing his taper on the ground, wiſhed all thoſe who broke the charters might thus burn and ſmoke in hell-fire.

We are bound in charity to believe, that, when Henry gave his aſſent to this terrible execration, he really intended to perform his promiſe; but he was ſo fickle and inconſtant in his temper, and ſo little ſubject to ſcruples of conſcience, that the parliament was no ſooner diſſolved than he endeavoured

* M. Paris ſeems to inſinuate, that biſhops only had tapers in their hands; for he makes the king ſay that he would not hold one; "becauſe he was no "prieſt."

deavoured to free himſelf from thoſe ſalutary reſtraints, to which he had ſo voluntarily and ſo ſolemnly ſubmitted.

To this conduct he was further prompted by the pernicious advice of his foreign favourites, who continually inſpired him with notions of arbitrary power, and told him that while theſe charters ſhould continue in force, he was no more than the ſhadow of a king. But as they obſerved he was a little uneaſy at the conſideration of his oath, they adviſed him to apply to the pope, who, for the preſent of a few hundred marks, would extricate him out of that difficulty, and give him an effectual balſam to heal the wounds of his conſcience; and Henry, who ſeems to have believed that his holineſs was actually poſſeſſed of ſuch a noſtrum, was either ſo weak or ſo wicked as to follow this pernicious counſel.

Mean while, he ordered all his military tenants to attend him with horſe and arms at Portſmouth, on the twenty-ſecond of June, and laid an embargo on the ſhipping for their tranſportation to the Continent; but before he embarked, he reſolved to reconcile himſelf to the citizens of London, who, on account of his arbitrary and oppreſſive meaſures, were but ill affected to his perſon and government.

They

They were ſo much incenſed at the fair he had inſtituted at Weſtminſter, that they raiſed ſeveral tumults on that account, and embraced every opportunity of abuſing and inſulting the king's ſervants. Provoked at theſe outrages, he had ſeized their charters, and appointed a guardian to keep the city in order; and thus, deprived of their liberties, and injured in their trade, they could not be ſuppoſed to be friends to his adminiſtration; but he now took care to redreſs theſe grievances, by reſtoring their charters, confirming their privileges, and indulging them with ſome new exemptions, which effectually appeaſed their reſentment.

Having taken this neceſſary precaution, for ſecuring the public tranquillity, he appointed the queen guardian of the realm, with inſtructions to follow the advice of his brother Richard, whom he entruſted with the great ſeal; and ſetting ſail from Portſmouth on the ſixth of Auguſt, with a fleet of three hundred ſhips and a number of gallies, arrived about the middle of the ſame month at Bourdeaux, which place he found greatly incommoded by the garriſons of Fronſac, Benanges, and La Reole.

Theſe three caſtles had been treacherouſly given up to the revolters, by the earl of Leiceſter; but they were ſoon recovered by the

the Engliſh forces, who reduced all the other fortreſſes in the county, expelled the rebels out of the province, and obliged their chief, Gaſton de Bearne, to fly for refuge to the king of Caſtile, who conferred upon him the honour of knighthood, and accepted his homage.

As this prince ſtill threatened the country with an invaſion, Henry wrote to the queen and his brother, deſiring them to ſend him a reinforcement of men, and a ſupply of money, with all poſſible expedition.*

Immediately, upou the receipt of this letter, a parliament was aſſembled at Weſtminſter, where the lay-nobility entered into a reſolution to meet at London on the third of May, from thence to proceed to Portſmouth, and forthwith embark for Gaſcony, in caſe that province ſhould be invaded by Alphonſo. The biſhops of Canterbury, Wincheſter, London, and Worceſter, engaged to ſerve in perſon, and the other prelates undertook to furniſh ſupplies of money.

Orders were ſent to Ireland, requiring the military tenants of the crown to hold themſelves in readineſs to embark at Waterford, immediately after Eaſter; and an aid was demanded from the prelates and barons

* A. D. 1254.

barons of that kingdom, who accordingly met at Dublin to deliberate on the ſubject.

The ſame meaſures were purſued in England; all who held twenty pounds a year in capite of the king, or of minors in his wardſhip, were commanded to repair to Portſmouth againſt the day of rendezvous; and writs were ſent to the ſheriffs, ordering them, "to return two legal and diſcreet knights, to repreſent "each county, before the king's council "at Weſtminſter, to conſult about the "means of levying ſuch aids as they "ſhould think proper to grant the king "in his preſent neceſſity." This ſubſidy however, does not ſeem to have been granted, as, about this time, the king's affairs took a more favourable turn in Gaſcony.

Henry, conſcious of his own inability to manage a war with any probability of ſucceſs, and dreading the ſuperior conduct and capacity of Alphonſo, reſolved to make an accommodation with that monarch, and even to engage in a league with him, ſtrengthened by a marriage between Alphonſo's half ſiſter, Eleanor, and his ſon Edward.

It was probably with this view, that he beſtowed upon the young prince a grant of Ireland, with the earldom of Cheſter, the

the town and caſtle of Briſtol, and all his dominions on the Continent, whether uſurped by foreign powers, or in the actual poſſeſſion of the crown of England; and if the rents of all theſe ſhould not amount to fifteen thouſand marks a year, he engaged to make up that ſum by further grants, for his conſtant revenue.

Peter, biſhop of Hereford, and John Manſel, provoſt of Beverley, were the perſons deputed to negociate this treaty; and, ſetting out for the court of Caſtile, in the month of February, they executed their commiſſion with ſo much ability and diſpatch, that the contract was ſettled in the beginning of April, together with the articles of a treaty offenſive and defenſive.

Theſe imported, that Alphonſo ſhould quit all the claim, which either himſelf, his wife Yolante, or his daughter Berengeria, had to Gaſcony, and deliver up all the writings upon which ſuch claim was founded; that Henry ſhould aſſiſt him in his war againſt the king of Navarre, beſtow his daughter on Alphonſo's brother, and endeavour to prevail upon the pope to commute his vow to ſerve in Paleſtine, for an expedition againſt the infidels in Africa; that Gaſton de Bearne, and the other lords who had joined the king of Caſtile, ſhould be reſtored to the poſſeſſion of their eſtates;

and

and that prince Edward ſhould come over to Bourdeaux immediately, and thence proceed to Burgos, where he ſhould be knighted by Alphonſo, and married to his ſiſter within five weeks after Michaelmas.

Accordingly young Edward, now in the ſeventeenth year of his age, repaired to Bourdeaux, with his mother and his ſiſter Beatrix, and, after ratifying the articles of the treaty, continued his journey to the court of Caſtile, where he was received with great honours, and univerſally admired. There he continued for ſome time after the celebration of the marriage, and then returned to Bourdeaux, before his father ſet out for England.

Henry not chuſing to expoſe himſelf to the danger of a paſſage by ſea, as the winter was now approaching, reſolved to travel by land to Calais; and taking Paris in his way, was entertained with great pomp and magnificence by Lewis, who had juſt returned from Paleſtine. From thence he proceeded to the ſea-ſide, and, on the twenty-ſeventh of December, arrived at Dover.

He made a magnificent entry into London, from the citizens of which he received a preſent of one hundred pounds, and a maſſy piece of plate of exquiſite workmanſhip. This, however, did not hinder him from fleecing them in a few days after, of a more

more conſiderable ſum. A prieſt, accuſed of murder, having eſcaped from Newgate, where the biſhops had confined him, the city was amerced in no leſs than three thouſand marks, as a puniſhment for this neglect of duty; a ſentence which was deemed the more unjuſt, as it appeared, from inconteſtible evidence, that the biſhop's officers themſelves favoured the eſcape of the priſoner.

This foreign expedition, the moſt ſucceſsful of any in which Henry had ever been engaged, was yet attended with many inconveniences. It brought upon the nation an intolerable load of debt, not only by the expences attending the marriage of prince Edward, but likewiſe by an imprudent contract which Henry made with the Roman pontiff.

Innocent had conceived ſuch an implacable rancour againſt the late emperor Frederic, that, not ſatisfied with having perſecuted him to his dying day, his reſentment ſeemed capable of being appeaſed by nothing leſs than the utter extinction of his whole race.

He had carried on a war againſt Frederic's two ſons, Conrad and Henry, and ſent his nuncio Albert into England, to make an offer of the crown of Sicily to the

earl of Cornwall; but Richard, who, whatever failings he might have, was certainly a man of great and generous sentiments, rejected the proposal with a noble disdain, and refused to accept even of a crown, if he could not obtain it without engaging in a war against his own nephew.*

Henry, however, who was an utter stranger to all the finer feelings of the human heart, readily accepted the offer in favour of his second son Edmund, and chearfully submitted to all the conditions which his holiness thought proper to impose: he bound himself, and his kingdom, for immense sums; presented the pope with all the money in his own exchequer, as well as with what he could extort from the Jews, who were forced to pay about eight thousand marks; he remitted to him what sums he could borrow of his brother Richard, and the Italian merchants, at an extravagant interest; and he even gave him an unlimited power to borrow in his name, obliging himself, under pain of being excommunicated and deprived of his royal dignity, to discharge all such debts as he should contract in the execution of this undertaking.

The

* The late emperor, Frederic, was married to Isabella, sister to Henry and Richard.

The enterprize, indeed, was now become more conſiſtent with the principles of equity and honour; his nephew, Henry, had been aſſaſſinated by the contrivance of his own brother Conrad, who was ſoon after poiſoned by his baſtard brother Mainfroy; and this natural ſon of Frederic immediately mounted the throne of Sicily.

The pope, who had hitherto been actuated by a ſpirit of revenge, now affected to be influenced by the dictates of juſtice: he forthwith levied an army, in order to dethrone the uſurper; but his troops were routed, between Troya and Foggia, and himſelf threatened with a ſiege in his capital; and this diſaſter filled him with ſuch grief and anxiety, as threw him into a fit of ſickneſs, which at laſt brought him to his grave.

He was ſucceeded in the papal chair by Alexander IV. who, purſuing the meaſures of his predeceſſor, maintained the war in Apuglia, and inveſted Edmund in the kingdom of Sicily.

This ceremony was performed with a ring, by the biſhop of Bologna, who was ſent over to England on purpoſe, and was, at the ſame time, empowered to abſolve the king from his oath for the cruſade, on

* A. D. 1244.

condition he would make another for transporting an army into Apuglia; and accordingly Henry swore, by his titular saint Edward, that he would go thither in person.

While the bishop was on his way to England, the pope's affairs were irretrievably ruined. He had levied an army of sixty thousand men, and given the command of it to cardinal Octavian Ulbaldini Florentinus, with orders to besiege Mainfroy in the city of Nocera. But that prince, having found means to divide the papal forces, sallied out of the town, and attacked them with such fury and impetuosity, that he routed them with great slaughter, and obliged them to abandon the country, in consequence of which he was crowned king of the two Sicilies, at Palermo.

Though the bishop was fully apprised of this disaster, he took care to keep it a profound secret from Henry, who promised to exert his most vigorous efforts in supporting the cause of Alexander, and putting Edmund in actual possession of that throne, which his holiness had so generously bestowed upon him. With this view he assembled a parliament, and demanded a supply of money with as much assurance, as if he had undertaken some project, calculated solely for the public good.

Though

Though the barons conſidered themſelves as altogether unconcerned in the affairs of Sicily, they yet imagined they might derive ſome advantage from the king's neceſſities, by improving the preſent opportunity, ſo as to obtain a more thorough confirmation of their two charters. They therefore told him, they would grant him a ſubſidy, provided he wonld engage faithfully to obſerve the charters of liberties, and allow them to appoint the juſticiary, treaſurer, and chancellor, independent of his authority; but Henry refuſed to ſubmit to ſuch diſagreeable reſtrictions, and immediately prorogued the parliament.

Mean while Henry was called into Scotland, by the ſollicitation of the queen, his daughter, who alledged ſhe was ill uſed by the regents of that kingdom; * and he had no ſooner removed her complaints, and rendered her ſituation more agreeable, than he returned into his own dominions.

By this time Henry began to feel the load of his debts to be altogether inſup-

 portable

* M. Paris informs us, that the regents, Sir Robert de Roſs, and Sir John Baliol, were accuſed of retrenching the queen of her liberty, and depriving her and her huſband of the rights of the marriage-bed; but that Henry puniſhed the regents, and reſtored the royal pair to all the privileges of the matrimonial union.

portable. The late pope, abuſing the power which he had ſo imprudently given him, had borrowed immenſe ſums in his name for the conqueſt of Sicily; his creditors were extremely clamorous and urgent in their demands, and dunned him with perpetual importunities, ſo that his life was become wholly miſerable; and yet notwithſtanding his wretched ſituation, Alexander endeavoured to drain this impoveriſhed kingdom of ſtill further ſums of money.

He ſent a nuncio, called Ruſtan, with bulls for levying exactions on the clergy. The firſt bull he produced, empowered him to collect the tythes in England, Ireland, and even in Scotland, for the king and his holineſs.

This bull was expreſſed in terms which cut off all poſſibility of cavil: the pope laid the impoſition upon them; "notwithſtanding any former letters, indulgences, privileges, exemptions, or other grants, under what form or pretence ſoever, and notwithſtanding any objections to the contrary."

By the ſecond bull he was ordered to commute the king's vow of pilgrimage, for another to undertake the conqueſt of Sicily; a conqueſt which the pope declared

to

to be of far greater conſequence than that of Jeruſalem. A cruſade was accordingly preached up againſt Mainfroy as an enemy to the Chriſtian faith; and a general indulgence was promiſed to all thoſe who ſhould aſſiſt in dethroning that excommunicated uſurper.

The parliament being again aſſembled, Henry renewed his demand of a ſubſidy, and this he hoped to obtain with the greater eaſe, as he had ſummoned none of thoſe barons who oppoſed the motion in the laſt ſeſſion.

But Henry was a weak and a ſhallow politician; the very means he had employed to enſure ſucceſs, contributed effectually to defeat his project: the members refuſed to comply with his requeſt, and alledged, in excuſe, that they could take no ſtep of any importance, unleſs thoſe who had a right to ſet in parliament, were ſummoned to attend.

Thus repulſed, he diſmiſſed the aſſembly, and reſolved to employ other methods for recruiting his finances. He endeavoured to borrow ſome further ſums from his brother Richard, but met with a flat refuſal, the earl being greatly piqued at his undertaking ſuch a weighty enterprize, without conſulting him and the other barons of the realm.

But

But what Henry could not obtain by his own outhority, he hoped he ſhould be able to procure by the interpoſition of the pope, whoſe aſſiſtance he now ſollicited; and Alexander, who was never backward to engage in any ſcheme that tended to his own advantage, readily eſpouſed his intereſt. He furniſhed him with a number of bulls empowering him to levy exactions upon every claſs of people, and upon almoſt every commodity.

This greedy and rapacious pontiff, not only oppreſſed England with cruel impoſitions, but even burthened Scotland and Norway with contributions to gratify his own inſatiable avarice; for whatever ſums were collected for the Sicilian expedition, he converted to his own private occaſions; while Mainfroy was ſuffered to enjoy his crown without moleſtation.

The ſums too which he had borrowed in Henry's name, amounted, according to to his own account, to no leſs than one hundred thirty-five thouſand five hundred and forty marks, excluſive of intereſt; and as he was too well acquainted with the king's neceſſities to think he could diſcharge this load of debt out of his ordinary revenue, he contrived a ſcheme alike ingenious and deteſtable for ſupplying that defect.

He

He ordered a number of obligatory notes to be drawn up, by which every biſhop, abbot and prior in England ſhould acknowledge himſelf to have received from ſuch a merchant of Sienna, Florence, or ſome other place in Italy, the ſum of------* for the uſe of his church, and bind himſelf to repay it at a particular term: theſe notes were to be ſigned by the Engliſh prelates; and that point being once gained, he thought it would be an eaſy matter to oblige them to fulfil their engagements; an inſtance of fraud, cozenage, and oppreſſion, to which perhaps it will be difficult to find a parallel in hiſtory!

In order to execute this villainous project, Ruſtan aſſembled the prelates, and imparted to them the demand of his holineſs, with which, he added, they behoved to comply on pain of excommunication. But the prelates diſcovered a noble ſpirit of independence, and rejected the propoſal with the utmoſt contempt and indignation. The biſhop of London, in particular, declared, "that he would loſe his head, rather "than ſubmit to ſuch tyranny and op-"preſſion." The biſhop of Worceſter joined him in the ſame declaration, and all of

* Five, ſix, or ſeven hundred marks, according to the value of their benefices. *M. Paris.*

of them made answer, "That the clergy of England scorned to be slaves to "the pope." The nuncio complained to Henry of the refractory behaviour of the clergy, which he imputed to the suggestions of the bishop of London. Henry, who was no less provoked than the nuncio, reprimanded the bishop severely for his obstinacy, adding that, since he neither regarded his, nor the pope's displeasure, he would make him feel the effects of his resentment.

The prelate, not in the least intimidated by this menace, replied, "That he knew "the king and the pope were his superiours; but that, should they deprive "him of his mitre, he would supply its "place with a helmet." But, notwithstanding this resolute and spirited behaviour of the prelates, the nuncio would not abandon his project.

By the help of the bishop of Hereford, whom he had found means to engage in his interest, he sowed dissentions among the principal leaders of the opposition; and, by caressing some, intimidating others, and threatening all recusants with a sentence of excommunication, he at last imagined he had staggered their resolution.

But

But he ſoon found he had miſtaken in his calculation; for, when he convoked another aſſembly, and renewed his demand, though they did not oppoſe it with their former ſpirit and reſolution, they yet laid hold of the abſence of the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who was abroad, and the vacancy of the ſee of York, as a ſufficient excuſe for poſtponing the determination of ſuch a weighty affair. Ruſtan could not deny the juſtice of their requeſt, with which he was therefore obliged to comply; but he behaved in a moſt arrogant and inſolent manner, and loaded all thoſe who oppoſed the motion with the moſt virulent and bitter invectives; he even deſcended below the dignity of his character, by his coarſe and vulgar expreſſions; ſaying, to one of the members of the oppoſition, that if it were not for the regard he had for the prelates, he would not leave him a hair in his head.

This reſpite, however, which the clergy had obtained, was attended with no good effect; for, in an aſſembly which was ſoon after convened at London, the nuncio inſiſted upon his former demand with greater warmth and vehemence than ever. One Leonard, who was appointed to act as agent for the clergy, replied, that their poverty would

would not allow them to comply with the pope's mandate, which, beſides, was altogether inconſiſtent with the principles of equity and juſtice. "There is no in-"juſtice," ſaid the nuncio, "in the de-"mand of his holineſs, inaſmuch as all "churches belong to him, and he may "diſpoſe of their revenues at his plea-"ſure." "All churches," ſaid Leonard, "may in ſome ſenſe be ſaid to belong to "the pope, in as far as he is their ſupe-"rior and protector; in like manner all "things are ſaid to be the king's; but as "no man ever took it in his head to af-"firm that the king is the proprietor of the "eſtates of his ſubjects, neither can it be "ſuppoſed that the pope has a right to the "lands of the church, or that ever the "founders meant to beſtow theſe lands "upon his holineſs."

The nuncio, incenſed at this anſwer, which, however, he was not able to refute, cried out in a threatening tone; "let e-"very one ſpeak for himſelf, that the pope "may know who are his friends, and "who his foes." But this menace, inſtead of intimidating, ſerved only to enrage the prelates: fired with indignation at the arrogant and preſumptuous behaviour of the nuncio, they replied with one voice, that they

they neither could nor would ſubmit to ſuch an intolerable impoſition: and that they would rather ſuffer death than depart from their reſolution.

Ruſtan finding it impoſſible to frighten them into a compliance, began to change his meaſures, and endeavoured to ſoften them by more mild and gentle expreſſions. He ſaid he would go to Rome, and conſult his holineſs, who perhaps might be induced to abate ſomething in his demands; and the dean of St. Paul's was deputed by the clergy to juſtify their conduct, and explain the reaſons of their refuſal.

The pope alledged, that as the ſums had been really borrowed for the ſervice of the king and the church of England, he therefore inſiſted upon their paying the bills according to his firſt calculation; but that he would readily indulge them with this favour, that the ſums thus advanced might be deducted from the tythes which ſhould afterwards be granted to his majeſty; and to this deciſion the clergy were at laſt obliged to ſubmit.*

Ruſtan had no ſooner gained this important point, than he convened the abbots of the Ciſtercians, and demanded the profits of one year's wool for the uſe of

* A. D. 1256.

the king and his holineſs; and they replied, that they could not comply with ſuch a demand until it ſhould be conſidered in a general chapter of the order.

The nuncio, incenſed at this reply, which, however juſt and reaſonable in itſelf, he conſidered as a mere evaſion, broke out into a violent paſſion, and ſwore, that ſince he could not perſuade them in a body, he would be revenged on each in particular. Nor was it long before he carried his menaces into execution.

He commenced ſuits againſt many individuals on falſe and frivolous pretences, and obliged them to compound by paying large ſums of money. But they complained to the pope of theſe violent and cruel proceedings; and his holineſs, who juſtly conſidered them as one of the moſt rich and fruitful parts of his flock, ordered the nuncio to deſiſt from his proſecutions.

Mean while, the king exerted his utmoſt endeavours in perſuading the barons to grant him the ſubſidy he had demanded for placing prince Edmund upon the throne of Sicily; and the archbiſhop of Meſſina had lately arrived in England with letters from the pope to the barons, exhorting them, in the moſt earneſt manner, to grant the requeſt of his majeſty.

But

But the eagerneſs of the pope, and the importunity of the archbiſhop, effectually defeated the purpoſe which they were meant to promote; from theſe very circumſtances the barons diſcovered, that the money muſt paſs through the hands of Alexander, of whoſe integrity they had no great opinion, and they could not agree to the propoſal of ſending troops into Italy, where they would be expoſed to certain ruin.

Influenced by theſe conſiderations, they abſolutely refuſed to comply with the requeſt of his majeſty, and preſented an addreſs, in which they explained the motives of their refuſal.

They alledged, that the enterprize was difficult and dangerous, and the kingdom already exhauſted of its wealth and treaſure; that they ſhould run the riſk of an invaſion from foreign powers, by leaving the kingdom in a defenceleſs condition; that the project was formed without the advice or conſent of parliament; and that the grant of the kingdom of Sicily was, at beſt, but precarious, inaſmuch as the pope retained, in his own hands, a power of revoking it, whenever he ſhould think proper.

Diſappointed in this quarter, he again applied to the clergy; and, with the pope's

aſſiſtance, compelled them to agree, that the tythes, which at firſt had been granted for three years only, ſhould be continued for the term of five. He likewiſe extorted large contributions from the citizens of London, and other corporations in the kingdom; and even extended his acts of oppreſſion to the Welſh, whom, as they were now become his vaſſals, he reſolved to conſider as his ſubjects, and treated them accordingly.

But theſe mountaineers, who were always poſſeſſed of a free and independent ſpirit, had not yet learned to bear the yoke with patience; they forthwith took to their arms, and invaded the Engliſh territories, from whence they carried off a conſiderable booty, and thus indemnified themſelves for the ſums of which they had been plundered.

Prince Edward deſired permiſſion to march againſt the Welſh, and chaſtiſe them for their inſolence; but Henry's coffers were ſo entirely drained of money, that he was obliged to ſit ſtill, and behold his dominions thus ravaged with impunity.

The pope, not yet ſatisfied with the large ſums which he had already drawn from England, continued to importune Henry for freſh ſupplies of money, and even threatened to revoke the grant of Sicily, unleſs he

he would immediately ſend an army into Italy.

The king replied, that, far from being able at preſent to defray the expences of ſuch an expedition, he could not even diſcharge the debts which had already been contracted.

In order, however, to gratify his holineſs, he remitted to him the ſum of five thouſand marks, and commanded prince Edward, who was to ſucceed him in the throne, to ratify the Sicilian treaty. He likewiſe acquainted Alexander with the obſtinacy of the barons, who refuſed to ſupport him in the proſecution of his deſign, as the affairs of Sicily had been greatly altered, by the elevation of Mainfroy to the throne of Sicily.

The pope now plainly perceived that the Engliſh were beginning to open their eyes, and ſuſpect the impoſture; and he therefore reſolved to draw as much money out of that kingdom as he poſſibly could, before the cheat was fully diſcovered.

With this view he ſent John de Die, as his nuncio, into England; and furniſhed him with a number of bulls, for raiſing money to pay the pretended debts which the king owed to his holineſs. By the firſt, he enjoined the biſhops to pay the tythes

granted to the king, without the deduction which had formerly been allowed: another granted to the king all the revenues of vacant benefices, in order to enable him to support the charges of his expedition to Paleſtine, from which he had already been exempted: a third entitled him to all the revenues of ſuch eccleſiaſtics as did not reſide in their benefices: in a fourth, he aſſigned him the tythes of all eccleſiaſtical revenues, according to their juſt calculation, whereas they had hitherto been rated according to the ancient taxation: a fifth ordered Ruſtan to adjudge, in the king's favour, the chattels of ſuch clergymen as ſhould die inteſtate: a ſixth commanded the nuncio to impoſe a tax upon all eccleſiaſtics, for the aſſiſtance of their ſovereign, notwithſtanding any privileges or exemptions granted by his predeceſſors, or any objections that ſhould be made to the meaſure: in a ſeventh, he excommunicated all the prelates who ſhould not pay their proportion within the time preſcribed by his holineſs; and ſeveral other bulls were publiſhed, all calculated to promote the ſame end, of raiſing money to ſatisfy the imaginary creditors of Sienna and Florence; though the whole treaſure was appropriated to the pope's own private occaſions.

At this time, many unfavourable circumſtances concurred to impoveriſh the nation, and reduce it to the loweſt ebb of miſery. Events, in appearance, the moſt remote from any connexion with England, were yet, by the folly of the king, and his unhappy attachment to foreign favourites, rendered ruinous and deſtructive to the kingdom.

William, count of Holland, and king of the Romans, being killed in a ſkirmiſh with the Friſons, the electors of the empire were divided in their choice of a ſucceſſor: the majority voted in favour of Richard, earl of Cornwall; and the reſt choſe Alphonſo, king of Caſtile.

The election of Richard gave great uneaſineſs to the king of France, ſituated, as he was, between the two powers of England and Germany, which might now attack him with their combined forces, in order to recover the poſſeſſion of thoſe territories which had formerly belonged to the Engliſh monarchs. Influenced by theſe conſiderations, he fortified his frontiers, and endeavoured to intercept the earl of Glouceſter and John Manſel, whom Richard had ſent into Germany, to examine the ſtate of the country, the diſpoſitions of the princes, and the character of the people, before

before he would venture his perſon among them.*

He had ſome reaſon, indeed, for taking this precaution: his agents, in negociating the purchaſe of votes, had endeavoured to make the beſt bargains they could, and refuſed to come up to the demands of ſome of the princes. In their agreement with the electors of Bavaria, Cologne, and Mentz, they had engaged to pay, to the firſt eighteen thouſand marks ſterling, to the ſecond twelve thouſand, and to the third eight thouſand Cologne money; but when they offered this laſt ſum to the archbiſhop of of Treves, and the other three temporal electors, they abſolutely refuſed to accept of it; and inſiſted upon their receiving the ſame gratuity which had been given to the elector of Cologne.

Theſe four princes, however, did not ſeem to intereſt themſelves greatly in the matter; for when Richard was choſen, they neither approved nor oppoſed his election. Treves indeed declared for Alphonſo, and promiſed twenty thouſand marks, in his name, to each of the other electors; but they flatly refuſed to eſpouſe his cauſe, until they ſhould have received the money. As yet, therefore, every thing wore a favourable

* A. D. 1257.

vourable aſpect; and though, in the ſequel, Alphonſo endeavoured to aſſert his claim, and expended large ſums of money in ſoliciting the court of Rome to ſupport his intereſt, all his attempts were rendered abortive, and he was obliged to drop his pretenſions.

By this time Richard's agents had returned from Germany, and given him an account of the country, which was ſo much to his ſatisfaction, that he reſolved to go thither in perſon; and a parliament was accordingly ſummoned at Mid-lent, to take a formal leave of him before he left the kingdom.

Although he was already maſter of more money than any ſovereign prince in Europe, yet, as he knew the Germans to be a needy and rapacious race, he endeavoured to encreaſe his ſtore by ſome additional ſums. Theſe he collected, not only from his vaſt eſtate, but alſo from his farm of the mint, and from the Jews, for whom he procured an exemption from talliage, for the ſpace of five years.

Thus provided, he ſet out for Yarmouth immediately after Eaſter, attended by the biſhops of Cologne, Liege, and Utrecht, Florence, count of Holland, and ſeveral German noblemen, as well as by many of the

the Engliſh barons; and, embarking on the twenty ninth of April, arrived on the firſt of May at the city of Dort. After having tarried two days in this place, he continued his journey to Aix la Chapelle, where he was crowned king of the Romans by Conrad, archbiſhop of Cologne, the elector of Mentz, whoſe right it was to perform this ceremony, being at that time under a ſentence of excommunication.

Next day, his ſon Henry received the honour of knighthood, on which occaſion he diſplayed a pomp and magnificence, that at once charmed and ſurprized the Germans. But, though theſe mercenaries were highly pleaſed with the grand and ſplendid appearance of their new king, they were fully determined, that none but themſelves ſhould ſhare in his favours: they therefore inſiſted, that all the Engliſh noblemen ſhould immediately return to their own country, though they had reſolved to ſtay a whole year abroad; and having, in leſs than a twelvemonth, drained Richard of the vaſt ſums he had brought from England, they treated him with indifference and contempt.

He is ſaid to have carried into Germany, ſeven hundred thouſand pounds ſterling, an immenſe ſum, which, added to the late exactions

exactions of the pope, almoſt exhauſted the kingdom entirely of its ſpecie, and contributed, with a bad harveſt, to produce a moſt terrible famine.

But, notwithſtanding this national calamity, Henry, intoxicated with his Sicilian ſcheme, importuned the clergy for a freſh aid, aſſuring them, that the late ſubſidy was not ſufficient to pay the debts he had contracted.

As he expected to meet with great oppoſition from the prelates, he brought his ſon Edmnnd into the aſſembly, clad in a Sicilian habit, vainly imagining, that charmed, like himſelf, with the appearance of the boy, they would by that means be induced to comply with his requeſt.

But this pitiful artifice, inſtead of procuring him money, would have only expoſed him to ridicule and deriſion, had not the prelates been overawed by the nuncio, who compelled them, by his menaces, to make him a grant of forty-two thouſand pounds.

To all the calamities under which the Engliſh laboured, muſt be added a war which now broke with the Welch, and which was carried on with great ſpirit and reſolution by the latter, and with great negligence and miſconduct by the former.

Llewellyn had lately made ſeveral inroads into the Engliſh territories, in revenge

venge for ſome breaches of the truce, of which he alledged the lords of the Marches had been guilty. But theſe ſlight incurſions would hardly have increaſed into a regular war, had it not been for an attempt made by Geoffry de Langley, governour of the country between Cheſhire and the river Conway, to introduce the laws of England into that diſtrict.

He made ſome progreſs in this work without meeting with any oppoſition; but when he began to erect hundred and county-courts for putting the laws in execution, the Welch, who were extremely bigotted to their own cuſtoms, immediately took the alarm, and trembled with the apprehenſion of ſeeing all their laws entirely aboliſhed.

It was no longer an affair of petty depredations, by which only a few individuals are affected; it was now the common cauſe of the whole nation; and every true Welchman burned with a deſire of maintaining, at the hazard of his life, thoſe cuſtoms and practices which had been handed down to him from his anceſtors.

This ſpirit, indeed, was become ſo prevalent in the country, that, in a ſhort time, Llewellyn had an army of ten thouſand horſe, and a greater number of foot. With theſe

theſe forces he invaded the Engliſh territories, and defeated the wardens in ſeveral petty ſkirmiſhes; he over-ran that part of Wales which was under the protection of Henry; and at laſt, elated with this ſucceſs, he ventured to lay ſiege to the caſtle of Gannook.

As the ſafety, and even the preſervation of all the adjoining country depended upon this caſtle, Henry reſolved to relieve it in perſon. With this view he ſummoned his barons and military tenants of the north and middle of England to attend him at Cheſter, and appointed thoſe of the weſtern counties to rendezvous at Briſtol, intending to divide the forces of the enemy, by attacking them at once in different quarters. At the ſame time, he ordered a body of troops from Ireland, which by invading Angleſey, as they had done in the laſt expedition, might deprive the Welch of all ſupplies of proviſion, which they received chiefly from that iſle.

Theſe meaſures were well concerted, but badly executed. The king, indeed, entered North-Wales, and advanced to Gannock; and though Llewellyn had waſted the adjacent country, and driven all the cattle into the mountains, he yet took care to be ſupplied with proviſions by a fleet, and continued in that poſt till Michaelmas.

But as the forces from Ireland did not arrive, and the weſtern diviſion appointed to make a diverſion in South-wales, neglected to execute their orders on account of the abſence of their general, Richard de Clare, earl of Glouceſter, who was ſuſpected of holding a correſpondence with Llewellyn, Henry, in theſe circumſtances, could not poſſibly bring the enemy to a battle, nor perform any action of importance, and was therefore obliged to return home, after a bloodleſs and inglorious campaign, for defraying the charges of which he had levied a conſiderable ſcutage.

MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

The End of the TENTH VOLUME.

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